

**Agricultural
Research
Service**

**Office of the
Deputy Administrator
Administrative and Financial Management**

October, 2000

CARE

PROGRAM GUIDE

**CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE,
REVIEW, AND EVALUATION
A
TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAO	Area Administrative Officer
ABFO	Area Budget and Fiscal Officer
AD	Area Director
ADAAFM	Associate Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
ADO	Authorized Departmental Officer
ADODR	Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative
ADP	Automated Data Processing (Resources)
A-E	Architect - Engineer
AFM	Administrative and Financial Management
AGAR	Agriculture Acquisition Regulation
APMO	Area Property Management Officer
ARMPS	Annual Resource Management Plan System
ARS	Agricultural Research Service
AT	Administrative Technician
ATCA	Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement
BDN	Bureau of Drugs and Narcotics
BPA	Blanket Purchase Agreement
CARE	Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation
CAS	Central Accounting System
CBD	Commerce Business Daily
CD	Center Director
CDSO	Collateral Duty Safety Officer
CEPS	Cluster Environmental Protection Specialist
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CRP	Consolidated Review Program
CRIS	Current Research Information System
CRAS	CRIS Resource Allocation Schedule
DAAFM	Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
DR	Departmental Regulation
EAS	Extramural Agreements Specialist
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
EO	Executive Order
ENR	Emergency Needs Request
FAM	Field Acquisition Manual
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation

FHCP	Federal Hazard Communication Program
FMD	Financial Management Division
FMFIA	Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act
GAO	General Accounting Office
GSA	General Services Administration
GPO	Government Printing Office
HQ	Headquarters (ARS)
HCA	Head of Contracting Activity
HHS-PMS	Health and Human Services' Payment Management System
HPRL	High Priority Requirements List
ID	Institute Director
IMOU	Individual Memorandum of Understanding
LC	Location Coordinator
LD	Laboratory Directory
LAPC	Local Area Program Coordinator
LAO/T	Location Administrative Officer/Technician
LOTS	Location Obligation Tracking System
LRPO	Location Radiation Protection Officer
LS	Lead Scientist
LSS	Location Support Staff
MCO	Management Control Officer
MMOU	Master Memorandum of Understanding
MMR	Monthly Management Report
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFC	National Finance Center
NPS	National Program Staff
OFM	Office of Financial Management
OJT	On-The-Job Training
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OO	Office of Operations (USDA)
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PAL	Pesticide Applications License
PM	Program Management

PROP	Personal Property System
REWO	Real Estate Warrant Officer
RL	Research Leader
RMIS	Research Management Information System
RSA	Research Support Agreement
RSS	Radiation Safety Staff
SY	Scientific Year
TQM	Total Quality Management
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VXP	Vendor Express Program

KEY AREA/LOCATION PERSONNEL

Area Director (AD) - Individual at the Area level who is responsible for providing leadership and direction on all Program Management matters within the Area, including all Centers, laboratories and locations.

Area Administrative Officer (AAO) - Individual at the Area level who oversees the administrative functions at the Area level, i.e. Budget, Human Resources, Procurement, Engineering, Safety and ADP. Also provides technical guidance and leadership within the Area to the administrative field structure.

Area Office Section Heads - Individuals at the Area level who report to the AAO and are responsible for providing technical support/guidance to the field in their particular sections, i.e. Budget, Human Resources, Procurement, Engineering, Safety and ADP. May have staffs they supervise.

Institute/Center/(ID/CD) - Individual responsible for supervising Research Leaders and directing the research effort in a laboratory.

Laboratory Director (LD) - Research Scientist who is responsible for supervising the Research Leaders and directing the research effort in a laboratory.

Location Coordinator (LC) - Laboratory Director or Research Leader who, in addition to their research duties, coordinates the administrative operations at the location and work sites. Supervises the LAO/T.

Research Leader (RL) - Research Scientist who is responsible for the overall operation of a Management Unit, which could comprise multiple research efforts (CRIS projects).

Lead Scientist (LS) - Research Scientist who is responsible for providing technical leadership to a group of scientists and support staff to accomplish a defined mission within a Research Management Unit. Supervised by the RL.

Location Administrative Officer/Technician/Clerk (LAO/T/C) - Individual who has responsibility for the overall administrative operations at the location and its work sites. Provides supervisory/technical supervision to a staff consisting of one or more of the following: Budget Assistant, Accounting Technician, Purchasing Agent, Personnel Clerk, Administrative Clerk, and/or maintenance personnel. The specific functions of the individual staff members vary from location to location.

Location Radiation Protection Officer (LRPO) - Individual who, in addition to their regular duties, coordinates the Radiation Safety Program at each ARS location that uses x-ray producing devices or radioactive materials.

Cluster Environmental Protection Specialists (CEPS) - Individuals who are supervised by the Area Office, but are located at field sites. Responsible for managing environmental program at more than one location.

Collateral Duty Safety Officer (CDSO) - Individual who, in addition to their regular duties, coordinates the implementation, administration and operation of the Safety and Health Program at the location.

Location Support Staff (LSS) - All support staff at the location including administrative and program.

INTRODUCTION

For years ARS has measured "quality" management with a concentration toward "conforming to requirements." This "quality measure" was and continues to be a basic threshold of quality that is established by Congress, defined by legal or subject matter experts, and interpreted through administrative policy.

Through the use of Management Reviews, Mutual Assistance Reviews, Verification Audits, and Compliance Reviews, ARS established "quality measures" relating to "conforming to requirements" and tracked/reported findings/accomplishments under the Procurement Certification Program, Vulnerability Assessment Program, and the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act. This tracking/reporting was carried out as separate programs under the USDA umbrella of the Management Control Program.

Concurrent with this Management Control Program, ARS was carrying out the Productivity Improvement Program. Under this Program, ARS made major quality improvements as was reflected in the ARS Productivity Improvement Efforts report of September 1986. These efforts continued in 1987, 1988, and 1989, through the Location Support Study, LAO/T Training Program, Location Automated System Task Force (LOCFORCE), Automated Procurement System Task Force, and the Personnel Demonstration Project.

In 1989, the Management Control Program and Productivity Improvement Program were moved into the stages of a Consolidated (Management) Review Program (CRP) and Total Quality Management (TQM) Program. With this move, "conforming to requirements" was de-emphasized while "meeting customer expectations" became the focused aim of TQM. This provided ARS with the opportunity to consolidate our review/quality programs and focus on internal quality concerning "HOW" the customers and providers of administrative operational services interact, and "WHAT" is the actual administrative operational services delivery.

Within this setting, ARS Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) has seized the opportunity to consolidate its review programs and implement a TQM approach. Recognizing that TQM results from "people" (customers and providers) who care, ARS opted to call this program CARE - "Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation."

The CARE program includes the major strategy areas for TQM. These areas are:

- Top Management Support and Direction: The Deputy Administrator's implementing memo, the signed Charter, and appointment of the Contracting and Assistance Division Director for leadership, subsequently reorganized under the Office of Deputy Administrator.

- Employee Involvement: The CARE Management Team makeup (locations, Areas, and HQ); planned interaction with locations, Areas, AFM Divisions and customers/providers of administrative support services; and, liaison between AFM and PM.
- Communications: Announcing and promoting the CARE program; input from all levels; direct interaction during reviews (two-way street); and, reporting/keeping all informed.
- Standards and Measures: Areas/AFM Divisions recommendation of sites/functions; Assurance Statements under the USDA CRP; use of existing review guides and questions; and, development of quality measures against administrative functions.
- Training: TQM training for Areas/AFM Divisions; CARE Management Team building; OJT by Management Team.
- Rewards and Recognition: Recognition of quality work being done at locations; rewarding those noted; using quality techniques to assist others.

The following approaches for the CARE program have been selected;

- Use Team building techniques to establish a cohesive/sharing group.
- Review each location once approximately every 5 years.
- Use Review Teams which:
 - C Are composed of individuals who represent the three organizational levels, (locations, Area, and Headquarters) and are from Areas other than the one being reviewed.
 - C Are lead by a selected member.
 - C Represent all selected functional areas.

Because the CARE program is aimed at quality through "people," the critical element of its success is the members of the CARE Management Team pool. These members must possess the following type qualities:

- They must CARE about the quality of the administrative operational services provided and the programs/clientele supported.
- They must have a "proven track record" for providing quality administrative operational services/support.
- They must be considered experts in their functional areas by their peers, clientele, and

management.

- They must be willing to share their skills and techniques with others.
- They must be open and willing to recognize quality administrative operational services being provided and techniques being used.
- They should have knowledge/ability in the overall administrative management functions of ARS.

While the CARE program consolidates ARS internal reviews, it is recognized that some external reviews/audits and some internal special interest reviews will continue. To the degree possible CARE review findings will be used to supplement these reviews. The following are not known to be fully covered by the CARE program:

- ⌄ GAO Audits
- ⌄ GSA Space Utilization Surveys
- ⌄ USDA Procurement Management Reviews
- ⌄ ARS Special Interest Reviews
- ⌄ ARS Imprest Fund Audit

Findings and recommendations of the CARE program will be used to support the:

- ⌄ USDA Consolidated Review Program
- ⌄ USDA Procurement Management Reviews
- ⌄ USDA Productivity Improvement Program

In addition the CARE program will be used to develop quality measures for administrative operations/management in the true spirit of TQM.

The following Charter, Organizational Chart, and Review Process has been established to implement and guide the CARE program.

BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- ℄ EO 12637 and OMB CIRCULAR A-123, Internal Control System
- ℄ OMB CIRCULAR A-127, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
- ℄ OMB CIRCULAR A-130, MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCES
- ℄ FEDERAL MANAGERS' FINANCIAL INTEGRITY ACT (FMFIA) OF 1982
- ℄ EO 12352, FEDERAL PROCUREMENT REFORM
 - Management Control over Government Procurement
- ℄ 29 CFR 1910.1200, FEDERAL HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM (FHCP)
- ℄ USDA's MANAGEMENT CONTROL PROGRAM
- ℄ OMB CIRCULAR A-132, FEDERAL PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN SERVICE DELIVERY which incorporates:
 - DR 1132-1, Productivity Improvement Program (PIP)
 - Total Quality Management (TQM)

CHARTER
CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW & EVALUATION
(CARE)
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

I. PURPOSE

The main objective of the Team will be to concentrate on assisting those reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations in the true participative spirit of Total Quality Management, and how to actually make the necessary changes to improve. While accomplishing this objective the Team will perform the "Limited Reviews" as spelled out in the USDA, OFM, Consolidated Review Program Guide.

The CARE program includes the review of all operational/management activities of locations through a consolidated approach that will provide sufficient assurance about the effectiveness and efficiency of the entire Administrative and Financial Management activities performed at a location. The CARE program will meet the minimum assurance requirements of OMB Circular A-123 (Internal Control Systems), A-127 (Financial Management Systems), A-130 (Management of Federal Information Resources), and Executive Order 12352 (Federal Procurement Reform). These Circulars and Executive Orders and other Federal regulations provide the policies and guidance Federal employees are to follow in executing their duties.

The goals of the CARE Administrative and Financial Management Team will be:

- Assist, in a helpful and proactive way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.
- Help to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of Total Quality Management.
- Assist those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.
- Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of location activities.
- Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

II. COORDINATION AND INTERACTION

The Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) will provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program. Linda Mooney, Management Analyst, AFM, will serve as the CARE Coordinator.

The Deputy Administrator, AFM, and the CARE Coordinator will interact with the AFM Divisions, Area Directors, Area Administrative Officers, and location Managers through meetings, reports, and requests.

The CARE Coordinator will provide the Assurance Reports as called for under the "Limited Reviews" section of the USDA, OFM Consolidated Review Program Guide to the appropriate AFM Division and ARS Management Control Official (FMD).

III. MEMBERSHIP

Review members of the CARE Administrative Management Team will be selected from Area and location level administrative offices, and branches of the AFM Divisions. Individuals selected will be those with a proven "track record" who are recognized as having the knowledge, skills, and abilities for getting the job done unobtrusively and to the satisfaction of managers, and/or are considered experts in a given functional area. Members of the CARE Administrative and Financial Management Team resource pool will typically consist of:

- 2 Location Administrative Officers/Technicians from each Area who are recognized for their experience and accomplishments in performing administrative activities.
- 1 or 2 functional experts from each Area Administrative Office
- 2 or 3 functional experts from each AFM Division
- 1 Research Leader Secretary
- 1 Civil Rights Manager

One third of the CARE program membership will be changed each year.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES/ROLES

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Deputy Administrator	C Provide Leadership in coordinating the CARE Program.
	C Provide resources in the form of a program coordinator and clerical support.

CARE Coordinator	C	Establish CARE Program Management Plan and Schedule.
	C	Evaluate and recommend CARE Administrative and Financial Management Team members.
	C	Coordinate and interact with Area/location Program Managers, DAAFM, AFM Divisions, Area Directors, and Area Administrative Officers.
	C	Select and recommend individual review team leaders.
	C	Provide leadership and guidance to the CARE Administrative Management Team through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team building - Objective/Goal setting - Established review procedures - Resource allocation - Consolidation of findings.
	C	Report accomplishments/findings to the DAAFM, AD, AFM Divisions and AAO.
	C	Keep AFM Division Directors and AAO's informed on progress.
	C	Report "Limited Reviews" Assurances to FMD and responsible AFM Division.
	C	Represent the CARE Administrative and Financial Management Team at conferences and meetings.
AFM Division/AAO Representatives	C	Provide functional expertise in the administrative field represented.
	C	Provide reference material (regulations, policy, procedures, etc.) for the function represented.
	C	Perform "Limited Reviews" and prepare Assurance documentation for function represented.
	C	Incorporate changes in Directives consistent with findings regarding gaps.
Area Administrative Officers	C	Develop consolidated Action Plan to address report findings.
	C	Follow up on report findings to ensure that action items are resolved.
Review Team Leader	C	Provide on site leadership to review team members.
	C	Lead entry and exit review briefings.
	C	Consolidate review findings and report accomplishments/findings to the CARE Coordinator.
All Members	C	Actively participate in overall CARE Administrative and Financial Management Team meetings.
	C	Actively participate in on-site reviews when selected.

- C Willingly share techniques, processes, and ideas on "how to" accomplish quality administrative support.
- C Actively seek techniques, processes, and ideas for improving administrative processes.
- C Provide "how to" advice, assistance, and OJT to those reviewed.
- C Recommend changes to processes, policy, procedures, or guidelines that will improve the quality of administrative support.
- C Recognize and document quality administrative support being provided by those being reviewed.
- C Draft appropriate sections of the report of findings/recommendations.

V. REVIEWS

A number of reviews will be scheduled every year. Each review will be performed by a group of members selected from the CARE Administrative and Financial Management Team resource pool. No member of a review group shall be from the Area in which the location for review is located. The review group will be led by a member of the resource pool.

A draft report of the findings/recommendations will be completed and submitted to the DAAFM and AAO within 8-10 weeks of the on site review.

VI. RESOURCES

The AFM Divisions and Area Administrative Offices shall provide travel and support services for their respective representatives.

Travel expenses for location representatives and the cost of meeting facilities will be from funds made available by the DAAFM.

W. G. Horner
Deputy Administrator, AFM

October 13, 1997
(Date)

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW, AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

CARE Organization FY2001

Executive Oversight
W. G. Horner

Administrative Support SS) QQ
Angela Johnson

CARE Coordinator S)) Q ARS - MCO
Linda M. Mooney R. D. Garlitz, FMD
Management Analyst

CARE Review Teams

Team #1	Team #2	Team #3	Team #4	Team #5	Team #6
Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader
Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader
Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members

REVIEW PROCESS

I. PRE-REVIEW ACTIVITIES

1. Review Team Selection: The CARE Management Team pool consists of employees from all levels of the AFM organization who represent all disciplines involved in administrative operations/management. This pool consists of review teams equally representing all levels and disciplines. The review team selected to review sites within an Area will consist of Area and location members from Areas other than the one selected for review. The CARE Management Team will select sites for review on a cycle basis and review teams for each cycle.
2. CARE Management Team Site Scheduling: Based on Area and AFM Division input on recommended sites or DAAFM directed sites, the CARE Management Team will establish a schedule for review of a selected number of sites within each Area. Sites where the LAO/T has been in place for less than one year are usually not reviewed, but may be reviewed in certain circumstances. The ultimate goal of the CARE program is to review all ARS sites approximately every 5 years.
3. Review Site Characteristics: The characteristics of the review site will be identified. Identification of these characteristics can be made through review of the ARMPS input for the current year; reports from the procurement reporting system, NFC-CAS, previous reviews/audits, real and personal property, and interest penalty; knowledge of the CARE Management Team; and, through contacts with AAO's or AFM Divisions. A generic characteristics package will be prepared (see Attachment I- A) to facilitate the actual review.
4. Coordinate Review Dates/Scheduling Letter: At least 4 weeks prior to the planned start of the review, a scheduling letter (see Attachment I, B) will be sent to the location management, with copies to AFM Divisions, AAO's, Area Directors, and ARS Management Control Officer. The Team Leader's Checklist (Attachment III-A) will assist Team Leaders with assuring that all pre-review procedures have been accomplished.

II. PREPARATION FOR CARE REVIEW

1. Site Characteristics: The CARE Coordinator will develop a characteristics package for each location to be reviewed. As a minimum this package will include:
 - C Summary characteristics cover sheet (see Attachment I-A)
 - C Current year ARMPS Summary reports for the location
 - C Current year position staffing plans

- C Prior FY Procurement Report
- C Real and Personal Property Report
- C Any previous (last 3 years) review/audit reports
- C Prior FY Interest Penalty Report
- C AFM Functional Checklist
- C Functional comment sheets from Area and AFM Divisions

2. Scheduling Letter: The CARE Review Team Leader will contact Location Coordinator and Location Administrative Officer/Technician to issue a joint scheduling letter announcing the CARE program intent, planned location review dates, and selected Review Team Leader. A copy of the CARE Charter and Personnel Interview Questionnaire (see Attachment II-D) will be sent with the letter for distribution at the location. At a minimum it is suggested that the Personnel Interview Questionnaires be distributed to the LC and LC Secretary, RL's and their Secretaries and all location administrative support personnel. This questionnaire is used to form the basis of the interview discussions, but is not intended to limit areas of discussion.

A copy of the scheduling letter will be sent to the Area Director, Area Administrative Officer, AFM Division Directors, and CARE Coordinator. The scheduling letter will be formatted according to Attachment I-B.

3. Telephone Contacts:

The AAO and the CARE Review Team Leader will personally contact the LC and the LAO/T to discuss the review and any areas of emphasis the location personnel would like the review team to assist them with.

III. REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. Introductions/Opening Conference: The CARE Review Team Leader will introduce the Review Team Members to the LSS. After the introduction to the LSS, the Team Leader and Co-Leader will have separate meetings with the LC and then the LAO/T to discuss the goals of the program. An opening conference will be scheduled for the LC, RL's, and their secretaries, LAO/T and staff, and other location personnel. The opening conference is twofold. First, it is to introduce the CARE program and Review Team members. Second, it is to get an understanding of the location characteristics along with any areas the location wants addressed. The Review Team Leader should take the lead by introducing the team members and providing a brief introduction of the CARE Program. The team should solicit concerns the location wants addressed. The agenda should be reviewed with notations of any needed changes. A sample Opening Conference Notes (Attachment II-E) will assist Team Leaders with the opening conference.

2. Tour of Facilities.
3. Interviews/Reviews: The reviews should be a combination of interviews and document reviews. Keep in mind the main goals of the CARE Management Team. The AFM functional checklist should be covered to the maximum extent possible. Actual review of functions should incorporate the guidelines contained in the USDA Procurement Management Review Handbook; ARS' Mutual Assistance Review Guide for the Financial Management Program; Area developed guides; and, CARE Management Team Guides.

Interviews of individuals to determine customer expectations and to bring to light concerns regarding administrative processes shall be made. These interviews should include the LC and secretary; RL's and their secretaries; and, the administrative support personnel. Interviews should take place before functional reviews are performed.

Attachment II-D, Location Personnel Interview Questionnaire, is to be used for interviewing both program and administrative personnel.

4. Documentation: All activities of the Review Team shall be documented. To the degree possible, all functional questions must be answered either through interviews or review of files and documentation should be coded according to the AFM Functional Codes (Attachment II-A). Functions/processes not clearly falling within a code should be noted for later addition to the coding. As interviews are conducted, clear, concise notes should be made on the interview sheets by one of the interviewers and coded appropriately (normally two CARE members conduct interview--one to ask questions, one to record responses). As the review of files is conducted, clear notes on findings should be recorded either on functional code section of manual or on paper by code. The CARE Team Leader is responsible for assuring that documentation is copied and provided to each member of the team so they can assess any issues, concerns, or exemplary practices during the review and also to write their section of the review closeout and report.
5. Assessment: The Review Team should set aside a portion of time to meet, discuss findings, and consolidate documentation. Questionable areas should be verified. The team should outline the "Exit Conference" presentation. Special attention should be given to positive findings. Any follow-up guidance/help/assistance should be noted. Major non-conformance which will be referred for action should be noted.
6. Management Briefing: The Team Leader will provide the opportunity for a separate discussion with the LC and LAO/T prior to the Exit Conference to discuss the review. After the review, the Team Leader will provide a briefing to the AAO and CARE Coordinator.
7. Exit Conference: An Exit Conference will be scheduled for the LC, RL's and their secretaries; LAO/T and staff; and, other location personnel. The Review Team Leader

should solicit comments on the team's activities, compliment commendable location activities, offer assistance/advice, and cover noted concerns about areas that could be improved. Sample Closing Conference Notes (Attachment II-F) will assist Team Leaders with the exit conference.

DOCUMENTATION OF CARE REVIEWS

IV. TRACKING AND REPORTING

Tracking and Reporting of CARE activities will support the management controls consolidated under the CARE Program. Reports generated will provide supplemental information to support ARS Internal Management, USDA Management Control Program, USDA Consolidated Review Program, and the USDA Productivity Improvement Program (TQM). To the degree possible, relational data base programs will be used to track and record CARE findings, recommendations, and follow-up actions taken.

1. Reports

CARE Review Report: At the completion of reviews at a location a consolidated report utilizing the format in Attachment II-B will be developed and signed by the Review Team Leader, reviewed and signed by the CARE Coordinator and Deputy Administrator AFM, and distributed within 8-10 weeks to:

- Original - Deputy Administrator
- Copy - AFM Division Directors
- Copy - Location Coordinator
- Copy - Area Administrative Officer
- Copy - CARE Review Team members
- Copy - ARS Management Control Officer
- Copy - Location Administrative Officer/Technician

Assurance Statements: At the completion of reviews at a Location, an Assurance Statement for each AFM Main (first digit) Functional Code utilizing the format in Attachment II-C will be developed and signed by the Review Team Leader, reviewed and signed by the CARE Coordinator and DAAFM, and distributed to:

- Original - Affected AFM Division Director
- Copy - ARS Management Control Officer

Recommendations: After the CARE Review report is finalized and signed, the CARE Coordinator will abstract resulting recommendations and transmit these to the affected ARS Management Official at the location, Area, or Headquarters. Recommendations to external

organizations (i.e., NFC, GSA, OO, etc.) will be developed by the CARE Coordinator after consultation with affected ARS Management Officials and transmitted via the DAAFM. An annual report of recommendations made and actions taken will be provided to the ARS Management Control Officer.

2. Tracking

Locations Reviewed: A relational data base has been established to identify all ARS locations and indicate those reviewed by a CARE Review Team and dates of the reviews. This tracking will be aimed at assuring that all ARS locations are reviewed within a reasonable amount of time. ARS locations will be those identified in the Human Resource Division's annual update of ARS Research Locations.

Recommendations: The tracking of actions against recommendations has been established to identify the AFM function, affected location, functional measurement, recommendation and actions. The CARE Coordinator will be responsible for tracking recommendations and exceptions and reporting open items to the Deputy Administrator, AFM Division Directors, and Area Administrative Officers until all items have been reported or corrected.

AFM Functions Reviewed: A method for tracking those AFM functions reviewed at locations has been established. As a minimum this tracking will include the AFM function, location reviewed, dates reviewed and functional measurement.

REFERENCES

- C ARS Field Acquisition Technical Manual
- C ARS Research Leaders Handbook
- C NFC External Procedures Manual
- C The ARS Resource Management System (ARMS) Manual
- C The Automated Annual Resource Management Plan System (ARMPS) Users' Manual
- C LAO Personnel Desk Reference Manual
- C ARS Facilities Construction Manual
- C SAMS Manual
- C LOTS Manual
- C PC-TARE Manual
- C How to Develop Quality Measures that Are Useful in Day-to-Day Management
- C USDA Consolidated Review Program Guide
- C OMB Circular A-123
- C USDA Procurement Management Review Handbook
- C ARS Mutual Assistance Review Guide for the Financial Management Program
- C ARS Guidelines for Imprest Fund Verifiers (Manual 303.4A)
- C ARS Guidelines for Imprest Fund Auditors (Manual 303.4B)
- . ARS Property Manual
- . ARS Extramural Agreements Manual
- . ARS Safety Manual 230.0

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I-A - CARE Review Characteristics Package

Location				
Mode Code:	LC:	Phone:		
	AO/AT	Phone:		
Name & Address:				
Work Sites:				
Research Disciplines:				
AFM Pilot Initiatives				
Responsible AFM Division:		Initiative and Responsible Contact:		
Acquisition				
Delegated Authority Level:		Individual (s)	Amount	
Imprest Fund				
___ Yes ___ No Amount:				
Cashier:		Alternate:		
Subcashier:		Verifier:		
Miscellaneous Payments				
Unit Certifying Officer (s):				
Real Property				
ARS Owned: Building ___ Land ___	GSA Leased: Building ___ Space ___	Commercial/ Private Lease: Building ___ Space ___ Land ___	University Furnished: Building ___ Space ___ Land ___	Are Government Quarters Provided: Yes ___ No ___
Information Technology				
Initiatives or Issues:				

Personal Property	
No. Accountable Officers: _____	Motor Vehicle Fleet: ___ Yes ___ No
Exchange/Sales Accounts: No ___ Yes ___	Animal: ___ Crops: ___ Other: ___
Safety and Health	
Collateral Duty Officer:	Phone:
RSS ___ Yes ___ No Individual:	Pesticide Applicator License: ___ Yes ___ No Individuals:
	Bureau Drugs Narcotics: ___ Yes ___ No Individuals:
Extramural Agreements	
Initiatives:	
Human Resources	
Bargaining Unit: ___ Yes ___ No	Agreement in Place: ___ Yes (attached) ___ No
No. T&A Contacts: _____	Delegated L/A Authority ___ Yes ___ No
Civil Rights	
Initiatives:	
EEO Advisory Committee ___ Yes___ No Special Emphasis Committee ___ Yes___ No Other:	Student Programs: 1890 National Scholars ___ Yes ___ No Summer Intern Program ___ Yes ___ No Research Apprentice Prog. ___ Yes___ No HACU ___ Yes ___ No
Enclosures	
ARMPS Printout _____ Location Executive Summary _____ Location PSP _____ Area Administrative Office PSP _____ State of the Location _____ State of Location Management Units _____ Acquisition/Assistance Plans (550's) _____	Procurement Report _____ Review/Audit Report I _____ Interest Penalty Report _____ Functional Comment Sheet _____ RATS Location Printout _____ EEO/CR Statistical Data _____ Information Systems Security Plan _____ Others _____

Attachment I-B - Sample Scheduling Letter

Date

SUBJECT: CARE Review - (Location)

TO: (Name)
Research Leader/Location Coordinator
(Location)

(Name)
Location Administrative Officer
(Location)

FROM: (Name)
CARE Team Leader

ARS Administrative and Financial Management has implemented a Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Program aimed at assisting locations in the true spirit of Total Quality Management. I have been asked to lead the Review Team at (location). After (____) years with the Agricultural Research Service, I find CARE to be one of the most innovative programs of its types that I have seen. It constitutes a golden opportunity to address, "How the customer and provider of administrative services interact, What is the delivery of services, and What it could (or should) be." As discussed in our telephone conversation, your location has been selected for review during the week of (Date).

The Review Team consists of several highly recognized location, Area, and Headquarters personnel (see Enclosure #1). A proposed agenda for the Review Team is also enclosed (see Enclosure #2) and a detailed interview schedule will be coordinated with the location prior to the team's arrival.

Enclosed for your information and distribution are the CARE Charter and Personnel Interview Questionnaire. As part of the team's process, we plan to interview you and your secretary, lead scientists, and the administrative support staff. This will allow everyone an opportunity to consider their responses in advance. In addition, we request that for those not housed in individual offices, rooms be made available for interviews.

Documentation of the CARE Review Team's activities will be developed during the review. This documentation will be finalized shortly after completion of the review, and will be shared with you (generally 8 - 10 weeks after the review is completed). In addition, as stated above, I will provide you and your Administrative Officer with personal briefings, followed by an Exit Conference to brief program and administrative personnel of the team's observations, recommendations, and follow-up actions.

(Name, et al.)

2

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached via Email (Name), Telephone (Number), or by mail at (Address). We look forward to visiting (Name of Location), and appreciate your support of the CARE Program. Through our combined efforts, we can add to the quality of administrative services while enhancing ARS' program delivery.

Enclosures

cc:

Area Director w/o encl.

Area Administrative Officer w/o encl.

CARE Coordinator w/o encl.

Division Directors, w/o encl.

CARE Team Members, w/o encl.

Date:

Time:

The CARE Team arrives at the location and members are introduced to the Location Administrative staff. The Team Leader and Co-Leader meet with you and your Administrative Officer separately. We will discuss the review and determine if there are any specific administrative functions/concerns you want addressed or additional individuals you want us to see.

Date:

Time:

Opening Conference

(We look forward to meeting with you and your secretary, your Administrative Officer and staff, and encourage all employees lead scientists, Union Steward, and any other individuals to attend.)

Date:

Time:

Tour of Facilities

Date:

Time:

Interviews and Review start

Date:

Time:

As required

Interviews and Review

Date:

Time:

Interviews and Review finished and function write-ups prepared

Date:

Time:

Team Leader and Co-Leader brief Location Coordinator

Date:

Time:

Team Leader and Co-Leader brief Administrative Officer

Date:

Time

Exit Conference

Attachment I-C - CARE Standard Operating Procedures

SUGGESTED REVIEW APPROACH

TEAM STRUCTURE

A CARE Review Team will generally consist of up to eight members including a leader. Selection of members should include at least two LAO/T's, one personnel representative from the Area or Human Resources Division (HRD), one representative from the Area or Procurement and Property Division (PPD), one budget and finance representative from the ABFO or Financial Management Division (FMD), one representative from the Area, Facilities Division (FD), one Civil Rights Manager, one Information Technology (IT) personnel, and a mixture of experienced and new members.

MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS

To the degree possible, team members should be paired for purposes of interviews and functional reviews. This pairing should be based on AFM Functions and, generally, the LAO/T's should be paired with an Area or AFM Division representative. This functional pairing will depend on the expertise of the individuals making up the team and the characteristics of the location being reviewed. Interviews should be performed by pairs, and the Team Leader and Co-Leader should interview the LAO/T and the LC. The LC can be a RL, a LD, or a CD, depending on the location's organization structure.

While all members will be evaluating and collecting information on all AFM functions during interviews and reviews, individuals or pairs should be assigned main responsibilities for each of the seven main AFM functions (HRD, EAD, FMD, ITD, PPD, and FD) and Civil Rights.

One member should be assigned the responsibility for recording the Opening and Exit Conferences.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND REVIEW

For best results, a location review should be built on the following progressive steps. Using these progressive steps allows the team to: 1) capture a total picture of the AFM management/operations, 2) point out overall or specific concerns for AFM functions that can be addressed while at the location, and 3) provide documentation for the report and assurance statement.

1. LSS and CARE Team Introductions
2. Team Leader and Co-Leader meet with LC and LAO/T
3. Opening Conference or 3. Tour of Facilities
4. Tour of Facilities or 4. Team meeting
5. Team meeting or 5. Opening Conference
6. Program personnel interviews
7. Team meeting to share impressions/findings
8. LSS interviews
9. Functional documents/systems review
10. Team meeting to share impressions/findings
11. Follow-up with the Program personnel or LSS on functions
12. Team meeting to consolidate impressions/findings and prepare for Exit Conference
13. Briefing of LC and LAO/T
14. Exit Conference
15. Briefing of AAO (as soon as possible after review)
16. Briefing CARE Coordinator (immediately after briefing AAO)
17. Report

The sequencing of steps 3, 4, and 5 are left to the Team Leader's discretion and the individual needs of the location being reviewed.

SOP FOR TEAM MEMBERS

PURPOSE

Based on the above progressive steps and the tools developed (questionnaires, functional listing, functional questions, and summary sheets), the following standard operating procedure should be applied:

Opening Conference

-
1. Introduction of team members
 2. Intent of CARE
 3. Any positive findings during the tour
 4. Question and answer session

Tour of the Facilities

-
1. During the "walk through" tour each member should maintain notes on observations, impressions and findings.
 2. Following completion of the tour each member should record these observations, impressions and findings.
 3. After the tour the team should meet to share impressions/findings and prepare for the Opening Conference.
 4. All documentation sheets should be given to the Team Leader.

Program Personnel Interviews

-
1. Using the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (which was sent to the location prior to the review) as a guide, team members should interview program personnel and note responses against each question on a copy of the questionnaire.
 2. Following the interviews, each member should ensure the information collected is clear, concise and is numbered based on the functional codes.
 3. After all interviews are complete, the team should meet to share findings.
 4. Interview sheets should be completed and given to the Team Leader who will ensure that copies are given to each Team member.
 5. Follow-up of identified concerns relating to specific functions should be addressed by the individual(s) assigned that function during interviews of the LSS and/or review of the documents or systems.

**LSS Personnel
Interviews**

-
1. Using the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (which was sent to the location prior to the review) as a guide, team members should interview individuals and note responses against each question.
 2. In addition, information collected during these interviews should be noted (where applicable) against functional codes.
 3. When time permits comments/information should be recorded on a copy of the questionnaire.
-

Functional Reviews

-
1. Using the AFM Functional codes, individuals should review functional processes, documentation and/or systems.
 2. Summary of findings or information collected should be used to answer functional codes.
 3. The functional code section of the CARE manual (or notes on paper by functional code) should be used to record specific findings.
 4. After preliminary interviews and review of functions the team should meet to share findings, discuss concerns and seek clarification of issues. Team Leaders will conduct conversations with Area personnel, and/or the CARE Coordinator, if the need arises.
-

**Follow-up (Program
Personnel, LSS or
Functions)**

-
1. After clarification of issues, or obtaining information for assistance or help, members should follow-up on specific functions or with Program or LSS personnel.
 2. Any assistance, help provided or information promised should be recorded on summary sheets.
 3. After follow-up the review team should meet to discuss overall findings, draft functional statements (each individual, or pair, should prepare a short draft of findings for each section of the assigned function), and discuss presentations at the Exit Conference.
 4. At this time all original documentation should be given to the Team Leader. Copies will be given to each Team member to be used in writing closeout “bullets” and their section of the report.
-

Briefings

1. The Team Leader and Co-Leader should first brief the LC and then the LAO/T on findings and proposed Exit Conference presentations.
2. The LC, LAO/T, Team Leader and Co-Leader should reach agreement on issues, or at least recognize differences.

Exit Conference

This meeting sets the stage for the formal review report and, as a minimum, should cover the following:

1. Positive findings
2. Summary of functional findings
3. Recommendations/Suggestions
4. Assistance/help given by team members
5. Unique processes or techniques learned
6. Appreciation for the Location participation in the CARE program
7. Question and Answer session

AAO/CARE Coordinator Briefing

The Team Leader should coordinate with AAO prior to the review to decide when the AAO would like to be briefed (either onsite after the review or immediately upon the Team Leader's return to his/her duty station after the review). NOTE: AAO should always be consulted during the review if any sensitive issues should arise.

The Team Leader should consult with CARE Coordinator throughout as needed and should provide a briefing on the specifics of review immediately after briefing the AAO.

Report

Based on notes from the Opening and Exit Conferences, documentation and individual member follow-up/input, the Team Leader shall prepare a draft report using the word processing template provided by the CARE Coordinator.

1. This draft report, along with the documentation and the Location Packet, shall be retained by the Team Leader until notified by the CARE Coordinator that the action plan developed for the location has been completed and the report is closed by the DAAFM.
2. The Team Leader shall prepare the Assurance Statement and refer the report and statement to team members for review and comment.
3. After review and comment the Team Leader shall finalize the report and statement and refer them to the CARE Coordinator for final signatures and distribution.

DO'S WHILE CONDUCTING REVIEWS

Do remember to wear your CARE button and a smile.

Do remember the primary function of CARE is to assist locations in a helpful and pro-active way.

Do remember that conversations with individuals are confidential and that names will not be used in reporting findings.

Do remember that you are a visitor in another Area and as such you may encounter different policies and procedures that **MUST** be taken into consideration.

Do remember that if you encounter a difficult situation, it should be immediately brought to the Team Leader's attention and not discussed outside the Team.

Do reference regulations in report whenever possible in situations of "Assurance with Exception" or "No Assurance"

Do remember to check with the Team Leader or functional specialist on Team if not absolutely certain of your facts **BEFORE** discussing policies and procedures during a review.

Do remember that you are only there for a week and you won't always get all the facts correct. During closeout, issues should be discussed with the LAO/T and LC, their comments regarding issues should be taken into consideration.

DON'TS WHILE CONDUCTING REVIEWS

Don't get involved in Employee Relations/EEO issues. If a situation arises, you need to let the individual know that dealing with these issues is not a function of CARE and that if they proceed, the matter will have to be brought to the attention upper level management.

Don't try to push your "better way of doing things" on the location. What doesn't work for your location may very well be working fine at this site.

Don't get overly involved with location personnel in "after-hour" activities since team findings are usually discussed during these times.

PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING ASSURANCE WITH EXCEPTION NO ASSURANCE

Assurance With Exception

1. Identify trend
2. Discuss within Team
3. Be able to cite specific issue, number of occurrences (or percentage) and Policy and Procedure, regulation, etc., that has been violated. Team should also be able to cite correct procedure (final report should contain a recommendation on how to correct situation).
4. Upon Team agreement, it can be INDICATED to location that a probable “Assurance with Exception” will be cited in the final report.

No Assurance

1. Identify trend. Seriousness of situation (as well as intent) will dictate difference between “Assurance With Exception” and “No Assurance.”
2. Discuss within Team.
3. Be able to cite specific issue, number of occurrences (or percentage) and Directive, regulation, policy, etc., that has been violated. Team must have thorough documentation of situation and assure that there was an intent to circumvent regulations.
4. Discuss with CARE Coordinator prior to citing “No Assurance”.
5. Discuss situation with AAO and Location Management. Location/Area must be made aware of the “No Assurance” call prior to the Team leaving the location and clearly understand what the issue is and how it should be corrected.

Attachment II-A - AFM Functional Codes/Questions

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - GENERAL

1.01 Location Administrative and Financial Management

- C Provide a summary of how administrative processes in general are functioning.
- C How do the administrative and program personnel interact? Are monthly staff meetings conducted? If so, are they beneficial?
- C Is the location doing any “best practices” that can be captured and shared with other locations.

1.02 Area Administrative and Financial Management

- C Provide a summary of the level of interaction between the Area and the location.

1.03 Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management

- C Describe the interaction between the location and Headquarters.
- C If the location deals with specific Divisions, state relationship and description of service provided.

1.04 Other

- C Describe any other processes that do not fit into the above-mentioned categories (i.e., program process issues).

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES, SERVICES, AND EQUIPMENT

2. Acquisition

- C Select orders from the purchase order log book for review. Look carefully at orders placed during the last two weeks of the fiscal year, and at orders over \$2,500.

2.01 Requisitions

Reference Field Acquisition Manual (FAM updated April 2000), and FAR Part 13, REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M, Departmental Regulation 5013-6, APC/LAPC Purchase Card Program Guide.

- C AD-700 Procurement Request: Ensure the file includes an AD-700 Procurement Request complete with required subaccount, specifications, funding, estimates, justifications, and approval.
- C Verify that the AD-700 is signed by an authorized individual. Verify that the AD-700 has a procurement request number and is properly dated.
- C Verify that the procurement office has a list of individuals authorized to sign requisitions and commit funds. This list should be kept current, at least annually.
- C Verify that a tracking system is in place to handle the administration of procurement requests, contracts, purchase orders, assignments of requests for action. An example would be to have a manual or automated log. Verify that an action is traceable through the system. Is there a management information system in place to report on status of sensitive actions?
- C Describe any inadequacy in the procedures for logging procurement requests, contracts, purchase orders, and modifications.
- C Document the type of acquisition planning in place.

2.02 Procurement

- C Verify that current P&P's, Bulletins, etc. are readily available.
- C Document the kind of random review and supervision of the purchasing function at the location to insure efficiency and compliance with regulations. What is the Area's involvement in this regard?
- C For Services: Is there evidence of utilization of performance based services contracting for the simplified acquisitions? If not, is there an implementation plan (AGAR Advisory 18)?

2.02-1.01 Imprest Fund

(NOTE: All imprest funds should either be closed out, have a plan in place to close out, or have an exception from Headquarters and Area for being maintained. If an imprest fund is in existence, please review as follows:

- C Ensure that imprest fund purchases have an AD-700 or a SF-1164 as a control document (ARS P&P 330 and FAM 213.2M updated April 2000).
- C If the imprest cashier is not a purchasing agent, is there a procedure in place to ensure the purchase is in line with Agency policies (i.e., purchasing agent reviews and initials AD-700)?
- C Ensure that imprest fund purchases do not circumvent directed sources of supply as stated in FAR Part 8 and FAM Chapter 4.
- C Ensure that imprest fund disbursements are limited to \$500 per transaction except in emergency conditions where the amount for any one transaction may not exceed \$1,000 as stated in FAM 213.2M (Updated April 2000) and FAR Part 13.305-3.
- C Ensure location is aware that emergency payments to individuals, partnerships, trusts, or medical corporations of \$600 or more for services must be reported to the IRS on Form 1099. Also, the location should contact the ABFO to initiate preparation of the IRS Form 1099 by NFC (PART 3333 of ARS P&P 330.0).
- C Verify that there is a plan in place to phase out the imprest fund.

2.02-1.02 Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA's)

- C Ensure that BPA's are replaced by using the purchase card when appropriate. Invoices for those BPA's still in existence should be paid using the purchase card when possible.
- C Ensure that BPA's are documented on an AD-838 Type 45 (FAM 213.2M, April 2000) and FAR Part 13.303-3).
- C Ensure BPA's are established according to FAR 13.303 and contain all the necessary terms and conditions, including individuals authorized to place orders and extent of their authority.
- C Ensure BPA orders are only used by those individuals authorized on the agreement (FAR Part 13.303-3).
- C Check to see that whenever possible, contractors invoice monthly rather than invoicing for each call order (FAR Part 13.303-3 and FAM). This is to reduce paperwork and cost to the Government.
- C Ensure BPA's are reviewed annually to reaffirm the need and proper usage (FAM 213.2M, April 2000 and FAR Part 13.303-6).
- C Look for repetitive items being purchased under BPA's that should be considered for a requirements contract.
- C Ensure that call orders over \$2,500 are documented to show that competition was obtained or notation for sole-source (FAR Part 13.303-5(d) and FAM).
- C Ensure that individual call orders do not exceed the maximum call order limit (FAM 213.2M, April 2000 and FAR

Part 13.303-3).

- C Ensure that BPA's do not exceed the total dollar limitation or its stated time period.

2.02-1.03 Purchase/Delivery Orders

- C Check log books for orders just under \$100,000 representing split requirements that were broken down into several purchases merely to permit the use of simplified acquisition procedures. Look for open market purchase orders that exceed the \$100,000.
- C Ensure there is an awareness of the procedures for ratification of unauthorized obligations (P&P 212.16).
- C Ensure that confirming orders are documented to show need for a confirming order and who placed it (FAR Part 13 and FAM).
- C Ensure that the total value of the order is within the delegated authority of the contracting officer.
- C Check to see if the purchasing agents are using required sources properly, particularly, FPI (UNICOR) and Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Act program sources (FAR Part 8 and FAM).
- C Check to see if procurement outreach efforts are being accomplished. Is there an awareness of the procurement preference program in terms of need to locate small business, small disadvantaged business, women-owned business, etc. (FAR Part 19, DR5090-2, DR5090-3)?
- C Ensure that Small Business - Small Purchase Set-Aside regulations are adhered to: Purchases over \$2,500 must be set-aside for small businesses. The file should be documented as stated in FAR 19.506(b)(c) should dissolution of the set-aside be necessary. Note: Orders under \$2,500 (micro purchases) do not have to be set aside for participation by small business.
- C Check log book for multiple orders less than \$25,000 that may have been broken down into several purchases merely to circumvent CBD requirements.
- C Ensure that Comp Demo Program regulations are adhered to: Requirements such as construction and refuse services under \$25,000 should be acquired according to the Small Business Competitive Demonstration Act.
- C Verify that all Open-Market requirements of \$25,000 or greater were synopsisized in the Commerce Business Daily or if documentation as to exception is in file (FAR Part 13 and FAM).
- C Ensure that competition is obtained for requirements over \$2,500. If not, the file should document why competition was not feasible or not obtained. For no-competitive purchases exceeding \$2,500, ensure price reasonableness is included in the file (FAR Part 13 and FAM).
- C Services over \$2,500: If subject to the Service Contract Act, wage rates should be obtained on the SF-98 and incorporated in the order (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

- C Actions over \$25,000 or under Comp Demo Program: Verify that an SF-279 was prepared in accordance with FPDS procedures and in the specified time frame for actions defined in the FPDS Reporting Manual. Note: SF-279 also is required for construction over \$500. Verify 281 code "22" is used on purchase orders to ensure action is not counted twice.
- C Construction over \$2,000: Ensure Davis-Bacon Wage Rates are incorporated in the order (FAR Part 22 and FAM).
- C Annual appropriation: If the order was for severable services, the location should be aware that effective August 21, 1995, contracting officers have the authority to enter into severable services for a period that begins in one fiscal year and ends in the next fiscal year if the period of the basic contract option or order under that contract does not exceed one year each (FAR Part 32).
- C Ensure that there is no violation of the restrictions against advisory and assistance services (REE Bulletin 99-202).
- C Request for quotes: The file should be documented to show the method of solicitation (either orally or in writing). (Written competition is required for construction over \$2,000)--FAR Part 13 and FAM.
- C Ensure that source lists are maintained and used to select sources for simplified acquisitions. (This includes GSA)--FAR Part 8, FAR 13 and FAM.
- C Defaults - In case of Termination for Default, did the office charge the excess costs of any reprourement action to the defaulted contractor?
- C Buy American Act: If a lower priced foreign end item was offered, was the Buy American Act evaluation factors used for actions over \$2,500.
- C Ceiling price: Are ceilings established for all estimated orders?
- C Delivery date: Does the order contain a definitive or determinable date for delivery of supplies or performance of services.
- C Are AD-838's, Purchase Orders, prepared in accordance with the instructions on IRS Form 1099 reporting requirements (NFC Manual Title II, Chapter 5, Section).
- C Ensure a waiver was obtained from GSA when an item was available from GSA stock or a mandatory Federal Supply Schedule contract, and one of the exemptions in the Federal Acquisition Regulation 8.404© did not exist (urgent requirement, below the minimum, above the maximum ordering limitation, outside the geographic area, or available at a lower price), but an open market order was placed for a similar item.
- C Check to see that there is a separation of duties from the individual performing ordering, inspecting, receiving/acceptance and invoice certification functions (FAM).
- C Ensure there is no evidence of excessive 4th quarter spending (more in the fourth quarter than the third quarter, excluding major HPRL releases).

- C Look for numerous orders with local vendors whereby administrative costs could be reduced by purchasing with a BPA, Purchase Card.
- C Check to see if multi-year or consolidated subscription orders are issued when it would be more cost effective.
- C Review purchases to determine if BPA's or Indefinite Quantity contracts should be established.
- C Check to see if procurement files are well maintained and organized. All pertinent data should be kept in the contracting officer's file.
- C Ensure that as stated in FAR Part 4.805, the location retains records as follows: 1. Construction contracts over \$2,000 and all other contracts over \$25,000 for 6yrs and 3 mos. after final payment. 2. Signed construction contract of \$2,000 or less and all other contract of \$25,000 or less 3yrs after final payment. 3. Records pertaining to contracts using simplified acquisition procedures 1 yr. after final payment. Refer to Part 4 for detailed info.
- C Check to see if the location has some form of data system which informs management on a regular basis of the production and backlog.

2.02-1.04 Purchase Cards

C Qualification and Training of LAPC

- Verify that the LAPC is in the 1102 or 1105 series. For those not in the 1102 or 1105 series, check to see what procurement training have they received to qualify them as a Level 1C Contracting Officer. This does not mean that the LAPC has to be warranted (APC/LAPC Program Guide and Departmental Regulation 5001-1).

C Reference Tools

- Check to see what tools the LAPC is using to manage and provide oversight of the purchase card program, i.e., Discoverer, PCMS, PCMS Newsletters, etc.
- How is purchase card information disseminated to the cardholders at the location?

C Reports

- Check to see if the LAPC is utilizing on a monthly basis the following reports. It is a requirement that these reports be reviewed monthly.

Cardholder Monthly Transaction Comparison Report

LAPC User Messages Report

Cardholder Monthly Reconciliation Report

- Check to see if LAPC has submitted any Quarterly Reports on Purchase Card/Check Use and Reconciliation. These reports are due on January 31, April 30, July 31 and October 31 of each year)

C Management and Oversight

- Is the LAPC performing any reviews of cardholder transactions?
- Is the LAPC keeping a separate file of the cardholder accounts selected for review with supporting documentation?

C Determine who has purchase cards (purchasing agents, scientists, technicians, etc.)?

C Ensure the purchase card is kept in a secure and safe location.

C Ensure purchases are for official use only (conduct a random review of the LAPC Cardholder Monthly Report).

C Review LAPC Cardholder Monthly Report to validate if cardholders are entering tax identification numbers and social security numbers when issuing checks.

C Ensure purchases made using the purchase card are not prohibited (APC/LAPC Purchase Card Program Guide and REE Manual 213.3M).

- Hazardous items (firearms, ammunition, explosives, or radioactive substances)
- Authorizing or permitting another employee to use purchase card
- Cash and/or travel advances
- Long-term (more than 180 days) rental or lease of land or buildings
- Telecommunications (telephone) services, i.e., major systems as FTS2001 or DSN
- Airline, train, bus or other common carrier tickets, or individual travel expenses
- Fuel and related supplies and services (except in an emergency and when vendor does not accept the Fleet card)
- Splitting requirements into several purchases merely to avoid the cardholder's delegated single purchase limit
- Personal purchases or identification
- Writing checks to self or for cash
- Paying in advance
- Greeting cards
- Memberships in an individual's (as opposed to an organization's) name
- Parking tickets against a Government vehicle
- Insurance of items being shipped to or for the Government
- Meals for federal employees at office or agency functions, unless authorized by law (purchasing food for Government employees for a bona fide awards ceremony is permitted by law)
- Shipment of household goods

C Ensure that cardholder keeps a log for recording purchase card transactions (REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M).

C If accountable/sensitive property is purchased by the cardholder, ensure the Property Office is notified.

C Review LAPC Cardholder Monthly Report for orders under \$,2500. Verify that orders were not broken down into several purchases on the same day or several days to permit staying within delegated limits.

- C Review LAPC User Messages Report to validate cardholder transactions were reconciled in accordance with DR 5013-6 and REE Purchase Card Manual 213.3M).
- C Disputes - Ensure the cardholder maintains a separate file of disputed purchase card transactions with required documents to ensure credits are received in a timely manner and to ensure items are credited appropriately when resolved. (REE Purchase Card Manual)
- C Review Cardholder Monthly Reconciliation Report to verify cardholders are reconciling purchase card/check transactions by completing the information required for proper reconciliation and assigning the appropriate check writing waiver in compliance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996.
- C What kind of random review is done on the purchases made by the purchase card? What role does the LAPC and the Area APC play in this regard?

2.02-1.05 Training

- C Verify warrants are posted (FAR Part 1.602-1).
- C Verify training plans are in place to maintain and enhance purchasing/contracting skills (FAR Part 1.603 and DR5001-1).

2.02-1.06 Government Printing Office (GPO)

- C Printing: Were printing requirements sent to GPO or if not, was a waiver obtained from the GPO Regional Office? (Note: in the Washington Metropolitan Area, all printing requirements must be sent to the Printing Management Division at USDA).

2.02-1.07 Federal Supply Schedule (FSS)

- C Ensure that delivery orders used to purchase from the FSS have (per FAR Part 13 and FAM):
 - The "Delivery Order" block must be checked on the AD-838.
 - The special item number must be shown for each item.
- C Ensure there is a SF-279 in the file for delivery orders, and delivery order modifications, over \$25,000 (FAR Part 13 and FAM).
- C Inspection - nonconforming supplies: If the ordering office received nonconforming supplies, the GSA Contracting Officer should be notified (For FSS buys).
- C Defaults - GSA contracts: In the case of contractor default on a delivery order, the order should be terminated for default and the excess costs of any re-procurement action charged against the defaulted contractor.

2.03 Administration

2.03-1 Simplified Acquisitions

- C Ensure there is an effective tracking system and procedure for determining contract and order completion, and final payment, for closeout purposes.
- C Scope of Order: If a modification increased the supplies or services ordered, it should be within the scope of the original order. If not, it should be justified as a "new procurement" action (FAR Part 13 and FAM).
- C Supplemental agreement: Ensure that if a modification increased the total over \$100,000 and it was by supplemental agreement, it incorporate the mandatory contract clauses.

2.03-2 Receiving Reports

- C Receipt copies of type "40" purchase orders under \$1,000 do not need to be sent to NFC unless coded "R" or "R1" in block 9.
- C Receiving reports over \$1,000 must be signed and dated and promptly released to NFC (FAM 213.2 and NFC Policy and Procedures for Purchase Orders, Title II, Chapter 5, NFC Manual).

2.03-3 Research & Development (R&D) Contracts

- C Ensure the location is contacting the Area Procurement/Agreement Specialist as the first step in the contracting process.
- C Ensure the RL's obtain formal approval for R&D contracts through CRIS documentation (i.e., ARS-550a, AD-416, AD-417). Copies must be kept on file at the location to support each R&D contract.
- C Ensure a properly executed Form AD-700 is on file to support the obligation of funds for each R&D contract.
- C Ensure the ADODR's (cognizant ARS scientists) have been issued a delegation outlining their duties and responsibilities and are knowledgeable of their duties and responsibilities in the administration of the contract.
- C Ensure the ADODR's are supported in the performance of their duties and responsibilities by on site supervisors and the ADO.
- C Ensure the requests for payments are verified by the ADODR and promptly submitted to the ADO for further processing.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

PERSONAL PROPERTY

2.04 Personal Property

2.04-1 Organizational Structure

- C Determine who has delegated authority as the property management officer (PMO) and if the Area PMO provides operational support for property functions..
- C Identify how many designated Accountable Property Officers (APO's) are at the location.
- C Determine how the PMO ensures that new APO's are aware of their duties and responsibilities as outlined in REE Manual 221.1M, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, & Aircraft Management, dated 8/3/99. (See Section 2, Property Management Authority, subsection "Accountable Property Officers")

2.04-1.01 Training

- C Verify that the location personnel involved with property have the proper support and training to perform property management functions. Confirm whether the property management staff has received any specific property management training. If not, determine whether training or additional support is needed to perform responsibilities.

2.04-1.02 Reference Material

- C Ensure that the location's property management staff has the latest versions of the following Personal Property references:
 - REE Manual 221.1M, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, & Aircraft Management (dated 8/3/99).
 - NFC Procedures Manual Personal Property System (PROP) (March 1998)

2.04-2 Property Inventory, Accountability and Control

- C Review APO files and inventory records to ensure that the Location performs physical inventories every 2 years and whenever there is a change in APO's according to REE Manual 221.1M. Check to ensure that the files contain a copy of the current inventory for APO's. (See Section 4, Physical Inventories and Agriculture Property Management Regulations, AGPMR 104-51.106. PROP28 report in PMIS/PROP will list APO name, address, and latest inventory dates to help CARE Team confirm current/delinquent inventories).
- C Determine who performs the physical inventory and certifies its accuracy.
- C Explain how the adjustments between the physical inventory and the official property records are made, ensuring there is appropriate documentation to verify acquisitions, transfers, and disposals. Explain how the Area coordinates this process with the location if the Area performs adjustments.

- C Verify whether the APO receives a copy of the reconciled inventory as stated in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 4, Physical Inventories, subsection “Reconciling Physical Inventories”.
- C Explain any problems that occur when conducting and completing physical inventories.
- C Ensure that records and other documentation concerning non-accountable property are kept to the minimum required to provide essential management information. (Documentation of disposal of all Government property is required, including non-accountable property. See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 3, Accountability and Control, subsection “Non-Accountable Property”. Other information is left to the discretion of each manager).
- C Confirm that appropriate managers are authorizing property passes (i.e., memoranda, form AD-873, OF-7, Property Pass, form AD-107, etc.) for employees who need to remove Government property from the location.
- C Determine how the location ensures departing employees return Government property.

2.04-2.01 Property Receipt and Identification

- C Explain how the location receives and updates accountable property. Review property files to ensure that files contain signed property receipt documents, including serial numbers and bar code/NFC-ID numbers (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 3, Accountability and Control, subsection “Receipt Documents for Accountable Property”).
- C What type of documentation does the property office receive from purchasing agents when they purchase accountable property with a purchase card?
- C Determine who is responsible for maintaining bar code labels and distributing as necessary.

2.04-2.02 Personal Property Records Maintenance

- C Verify APO files to ensure that transaction documents contain required signatures for acquisitions, transfers, and disposals (REE Manual 221.1M).
- C Verify that the location receives monthly suspense reports from the Area and how they are reconciled. Ensure that the location/Area reconciles all items to within 60 days of receipt (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 5, Suspense Listings, and PPD Policy Memorandum, Reconciling Area Suspense Reports, dated 3/9/00).

2.04-2.03 Security

- C Verify whether the location has any firearms, ensuring firearms are properly secured, bar coded, and included on the location’s official inventory (According to REE Manual 221.1M, Section 2, Accountability and Control, subsection “Sensitive Property”, all firearms are considered sensitive and are accountable property).
- C Determine who has access to the firearms.

2.04-2.04 Reporting Property Theft, Loss, or Damage

- C Determine if the location has experienced any property theft, loss, or damage. Ensure incidents are documented,

including statements from the custodian, supervisor, APO and appropriate law enforcement (for thefts). Confirm that documents contain appropriate signatures from the APO and property management officer, and any accountable property records are removed from PMIS/PROP. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 9, Reporting Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Property.)

2.04-3 Tort Claims

- C Verify whether the location has any Tort claims. Determine who is responsible for conducting the investigation and preparing the administrative report for submission to the Area for processing Torts (Refer to REE P&P 227.1, Tort Claim Administration, dated 1/25/99).
- C Explain any problems that occur from coordinating Tort process with Area.

2.04-4 Approval Clearance

- C Determine how the location obtains approval clearances before acquiring specific items such as copiers and trade-ins.
- C Confirm that the location follows the limitations and restrictions regarding acquiring specific items such as executive office furniture, furnishings, etc., according to Federal Property Management Regulation, (FPMR) 101.25-104.

2.04-5 Property Exchange

- C Determine whether the location evaluates property that is no longer needed for possible reassignment or exchange potential.
- C Ensure that the location follows exchange sale procedures when determining potential for exchange sale, including the list of ineligible categories of property, items must be similar (in the same Federal Supply Classification Group), and the one for one rule is applied (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 13, Exchange/Sale of Property and FPMR 101-46.202 for prohibited list).
- C Confirm that the location documents the trade-in/exchange process, ensure files include form AD-700, Procurement Request, or form AD-838, Purchase Order, with descriptive information (serial number/bar code, if accountable) and trade-in amount and form AD-107, Report of Transfer or Other Disposition or Construction of Property, to specify suspense accounting, transaction amount, and document receipt of the item (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 13, Exchange/Sale of Property).
- C Ensure transactions are accurately completed in PROP when exchange involves accountable property.
- C Explain any problems that have occurred with the exchange/sale process.

2.04-5.01 Acceptance of Gifts

- C Determine whether the location has accepted any gifts and who has the authority to accept gifts on behalf of ARS (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, subsection “ARS Field”).

- C Confirm that the location ensures the gift meets the restrictions for acceptance and documents receipt (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, subsection “Unconditional Gifts”).
- 2.04-6 Excess Property
- C Since excess property is the first source of supply, confirm the process the location uses to determine whether excess property is available before new acquisitions.
 - C Determine what methods are available to the location to view available excess property.
 - C Verify the procedures the location uses to acquire available excess property, ensuring required signatures are obtained on form AD-107 or form SF-122 and when acquiring accountable property, items are updated to PROP.
 - C Explain the procedures the location uses when reporting excess property. What type of documentation is required (memorandum, forms SF-120 or AD-107)? Review files to ensure documentation contains the APO’s signature and excess condition code.
 - C Review files to ensure that the location reports and documents the disposal of non-accountable property.
 - C Ensure that the location is aware of the length time for each reporting cycle pending final disposal instruction or sale. The required screening time frames are 30 day departmental screening for reportable property or 15 day screening for non-reportable property, 21 day Federal utilization screening, 21 day Federal donation screening, and sales cycle of approximately 60-90 days, however, there is no specified limit for sales (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property. These time frames are revised per FPMR 104-43.7001).
 - C Explain how excess property is identified and labeled. Who maintains accountability and control of excess property pending disposal? If the location maintains a storage facility for excess, are items labeled? (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property, subsection “Procedures”)
 - C Explain circumstances when the location or Area determines that local disposal instructions (via abandonment/destruction) are in the best interest of the Government due to continued cost, care, handling, security, etc. Review files to ensure documentation (AD-112's) contains appropriate signatures.
 - C Review files for documentation that excess property that has passed through the reporting cycle and is eligible for donation in lieu of abandonment and destruction is only donated to eligible recipients. Government property may only be donated to “Public Bodies” which basically are organizations that receive State or Local funding, and not necessarily non-profit organizations (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, subsection “Donation to Public Bodies” and FPMR 101.44.701.1).
 - C Determine whether the location has procedures in place to clear hazardous materials from excess property before disposal.
 - C Review files to confirm that the location posts the “Public Notice of Abandonment or Destruction” when disposing of excess items with an acquisition cost of \$500 or more (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, subsection “Public Notice” and FPMR 101-45.902-1).

- C Verify whether the location receives adequate guidance regarding excess property and disposal instructions.
- C Explain any problems that occur when reporting/disposing excess or scrap property.

2.04-6.01 Transfers under Specific USDA Donation Programs

- C Verify that the location follows procedures when transferring excess property under the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Act and Executive Order 12999. Review files to ensure property is reported excess in PMIS for possible re-use with USDA, form SF-122 contains appropriate signatures, and completed transfers are reported to APMO for inclusion in annual reports (Refer to REE Manual 221.1M, Section 17, USDA Donation Programs. Also refer to PPD Policy Memorandum 104-01, dated 5/14/99, donation agreements are no longer required).
- C Determine whether the location has transferred excess property to 1890 Land Grant Institutions, ensuring files contain appropriate documentation with signatures from appropriate property officers.

2.04-7 Agency Administered Sales

- C Confirm whether the location conducts agency administered sales and what coordination is necessary with the Area office. Ensure that property has first passed through Department/Federal screening.
- C Verify that files contain appropriate documentation of sale, including form OF-15, Sale of Government Property, and form OF-16, Sales Slip. Ensure proceeds are deposited into the appropriate suspense account fund if sale is exchange sale property. If the sale is not from exchange/sale property, are funds deposited to U.S. Department of Treasury as miscellaneous receipts?
- C Ensure that the location does not sell property to employees who are or were accountable for the property, used the property, or connected with its declaration as excess or sale. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 14, Agency Administered Sales, subsection “Exemptions” and AGPMR 104-45.302)
- C Determine if the location receives status of suspense account funds from Area/ABFO, including the availability and time frame for using suspense funds and how they are tracked.
- C Explain any problems that occur when conducting agency administered sales.

2.04-8 Motor Vehicles

- C Confirm that the location is aware of the Area’s limits on passenger vehicles (sedans/station wagons) and that any additions to their fleet are properly justified.
- C Explain the process the location uses when ordering motor vehicles. Ensure requests include type of vehicle required, optional or specialized equipment required, referring to GSA’s vehicle standards, and all documents include appropriation number and required signatures. Ensure that the paperwork includes the vehicle identification number and property identification number for replacement vehicles.
- C Ensure that the location acquires vehicles that meet the Federal fuel average fleet economy standard, meet

- replacement standards, and are the minimum size necessary to accomplish the mission. Ensure justifications are included when ordering vehicles other than standard vehicles (This may be accomplished at the Area level. However, locations are responsible for requesting replacement vehicles according to requirements listed in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 19, Motor Vehicle Management, subsection “Replacement Standards” and FPMR 101-38.4).
- C Verify whether the location has purchased any alternative fueled vehicles (AFV’s). If not, determine if the location has explored the availability of AFV’s (See PPD Policy Memorandum 221.1-02, Purchasing Alternative Fueled Vehicles, dated 2/11/00).
 - C Confirm whether the location receives status documents from Area or Dealer.
 - C Explain any problems that occur when acquiring new/replacement vehicles.
 - C Ensure the location’s vehicles contain Government tags, decal AD-792, Vehicle Marking, decal AD-185, Decal for Official Use, form ARS-715, Operational/Maintenance Record, and form AD-651, Accident Reporting Kit. The location should receive these items from Area before receipt of the vehicle.
 - C Ensure that the location maintains motor vehicle dispatch record/log that provides reasonable audit trails to verify official use (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Supervisory Responsibilities” and AGPMR 104-38.301(c)(3)).
 - C Ensure that the location secures motor vehicle keys and fleet cards when they are not in use.
 - C Explain any problems that the location has had with the Government fleet card.
 - C Verify that the location’s vehicles are mechanically inspected according to State/Local requirements. If there are no State or Local requirements, the location should follow the manufacturer’s recommendations.
 - C Explain how the location performs maintenance on the fleet.
 - C Ensure that the location performs quarterly visual safety inspections of vehicles and that any repairs or problems noted are promptly corrected (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, subsection “Visual Safety Inspections”).
 - C Ensure that the location tracks and documents quarterly operational and maintenance information in PROP or forwards to the Area for input. This only includes transactions that occur using any other method other than the Voyager Government fleet card. The Voyager Fleet Card automatically captures this data through PCMS-fleet and feeds the data to PMIS/PROP System. This also includes Government fuel and maintenance from on-sight facilities (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, subsection “Reporting Operational/Maintenance Data”).
 - C Determine whether the location has had any motor vehicle accidents. Ensure files contain signed copies of accident reports, including statements from the driver, passenger, and any witnesses (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, subsection “Reporting Accidents”).
 - C Verify whether the location has employees that use Government vehicles for home to work transportation. Verify whether the employee is authorized for home to work transportation because of field work and that the employee is

in an authorized job series designated for field work (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Home to Work Transportation”, and Department Regulation 5400-5, Use of Government Vehicle for Home-to-Work Transportation, Appendix A, for the list of authorized job series).

- C Explain circumstances for allowing home to work transportation for employee outside the authorized job series. Ensure the location receives Departmental approval for any other occurrence (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Home to Work Transportation”).
- C Employees who are on “official travel status” and use the Government vehicle in lieu of short term rental, may be authorized for temporary overnight home to work because they must arrive/depart at an unusually early or late time frame. However, this is determined on a case by case basis (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicle, subsection “Temporary Home to Work Transportation While on Travel Status”).

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION

3.00-1 Repair and Maintenance

- C Ensure that the location annually earmarks at least 4 percent of its base funds to accomplish routine repair and maintenance (R&M) needs or has received a waiver in accordance with Agency policy (ARMS Manual, ARS Manual 245.1, Chapter IX).
- C Determine if the location maintains a preventive maintenance schedule. Are buildings and ancillary equipment inspected on a regular basis?
- C Determine if the location maintain records of the repair history of its buildings or equipment? Are records utilized for multi-year facility planning and R&M budgeting?
- C Ensure the location's Facility Plan contained in the ARMPS correlates with the annually-updated 10-year facility plan.

3.00-2 Energy Management

- C Ensure the location is accomplishing building energy audits and retrofit projects. NOTE: The Area Engineer should be able to provide additional information regarding specifics for their locations.
- C Ensure the location maintain records of monthly energy usage to satisfy annual energy reporting needs of the Department.
- C Determine if the location is integrating energy conservation into its regular operations and maintenance activities per ARS Energy Management Plan, P&P 134.2.
- When was the last energy audit performed? Have recommended energy conservation projects been implemented or included in the Facility Plan? Does the 10 year Facility Plan include future energy audits? Were energy conservation projects recommended by the audits implemented?

3.00-3 Facility Accessibility

- C Does the location have a copy of *Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards* (UFAS) that establish the minimum criteria for providing access to people with disabilities in Federal buildings and facilities (The UFAS can be obtained from Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, Washington, D.C. 20202 or via the Internet).
- C Are location buildings and facilities accessible to people with disabilities:

- Is there an accessible route from the public way to building entrances?
 - Are there marked parking spaces and entrances for disabled individuals?
 - Are there accessible path of travel to primary work station, conference/training room, all purpose (gathering) areas?
 - Are there accessible elevators to all floors of facility?
 - Is there one accessible rest room, on each floor of facility, with proper door width; toilet stall; sink basin; path of travel?
 - Are there accessible water fountains?
- Ⓒ Have plans been developed to make the facility accessible to physically disabled? The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that new facilities, additions, and alterations to existing buildings need to comply with the minimum federal accessibility requirements.
- Ⓒ Are leased facilities accessible? (Note: In leased space it is up to the owner to conform to ADA requirements; however, if ARS is altering any space, UFAS or ADA requirements need to be applied.)

3.01 Architect-Engineering (A-E) Contracts

3.01-1 A-E Contracts - Formal Selection

- Ⓒ Determine if the location has A-E authority? If so, what is the threshold?
- Ⓒ Determine how the location obtains A-E Services.
- In-House resources?
 - Individual negotiated contracts?
 - Area A-E BPA task orders
 - HQ A-E Indefinite Quantity Contracts task orders
- Ⓒ If the location administers the contract, is the design within funding limitations clause monitored to ensure that the final estimated construction cost and the funding limitation comply (FAR 36.609-a(a))?
- Ⓒ If the location administers the contract, is the contract specified performance period monitored as required by FAR 1.602-2?
- Ⓒ Determine if the location has any concerns with A-E services provided under Area/Headquarters contracts.
- Ⓒ If the location utilizes the HQ A-E Indefinite Quantity Contract to issue A-E Task Orders, is the location sending copies of these executed task orders to Facilities Division (FD) Facilities Contracts Branch (FCB)?
- Ⓒ Does the location have uniform filing system for A-E contracts to include task orders?

3.02 Construction Contracts

- Ⓒ Does the location utilize best value procurement? If not why not & if yes, are FAR AGAR procedures being

followed?

C Does the location have standardized filing procedures?

3.02-1 Construction Contracts - Pre-award

C Determine if the location has construction authority. What is the threshold?

C What methods are used to publicize these actions? FAR 5 requires publicizing of contract actions.

- Displaying in a public place
- Electronic bulletin board
- Commerce Business Daily

C Are construction authorities and limitations documented and observed? FAR 36.205 specifies that contracts for construction shall not be awarded at a cost to the Government in excess of the statutory cost limitation. These limitations are described in P&P 242.2.

C Are project wage determinations obtained from Department of Labor (DOL), or are published general wage determination used? FAR 22 requires all contract actions over \$2,000 include specific labor standards, including Davis-Bacon Act minimum wage rates.

C Determine if contractors are allowed to use Government-furnished equipment. If so, is the equipment and liability clearly stated (FAR 45.102 and 45.302-1)?

C Determine if site visits and pre-bid conferences are conducted as described in FAR 14.207. Are uniform agendas utilized? Are the events of these meetings documented?

C If any additive/deductive items are included in contracts, was the clause at AGAR 452.236-70 used?

3.02-2 Construction Contracts - Post-award

C Determine if the Contracting Officer (CO) has delegated certain limited authority to a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) as the COR at the jobsite, and determine if a formal letter of designation has been issued which clearly describes these authorities and limitations, in accordance with FAR clause 52.202-1 DEFINITION.

C Davis-Bacon Act requirements are prescribed in FAR 22. Determine if Davis-Bacon Act requirements are monitored by the CO. Does the CO ensure that minimum wage rate determinations are posted at the jobsite (FAR 22.404-10)? Are weekly payrolls submitted by the contractor and reviewed by the Government (FAR 22.406-7)?

C Determine how payments are made under construction contracts. Are payments based on a percentage of completion for construction, alteration and repair (AGAR 432.103)?

C Determine if change orders or contract modifications were executed. Were these actions documented for the file as follows:

- What was the contractual authority for the change (changes, differing site conditions, suspension of work, etc.)?

- Were these actions pre-priced or based on actual costs?
 - Was the price determined fair and reasonable (FAR 13.106-3) (FAR 31.201-3)?
- C Determine if contract performance periods are appropriately monitored. If completion date passes, is some action taken to reestablish the completion date?
- C Are inspections conducted in accordance with FAR 46-312? If so, are files documented to show the results of the final inspection?
- C Are contracts closed out properly (FAR 4.804)?

3.03 Facility Security

Reference P&P 240.3

- C Ensure the location has an Occupant Emergency Program (OEP) established and that each employee has a copy. The program should cover processes to be followed during emergencies, such as fire, explosions, bomb threats and natural disasters.
- C Ensure the location is conducting physical security surveys.
- C Ensure the location is reviewing its security operation and administrative procedures.
- C Ensure that there is some type of fire protection/prevention system (alarms, sprinklers) in place (ARS Manual 230, Section A, Chapter IV and Manual 242, ARS Occupant Emergency Plan).
- C Ensure that the location is conducting annual "Emergency Disaster Drills" (ARS Manual 230, Section A, Chapter IV)

3.03-1 Workplace Violence

Headquarters AFM is in the process of developing training for all REE employees regarding awareness, prevention, and response to workplace violence. Training was scheduled for all current employees during FY2000.

- C Did the location receive the orange "workplace violence handbook"? Ensure it was given to each employee. (If additional copies are needed, contact the CARE Coordinator at 301/504-1005).
- C Is there a plan in place to respond to workplace violence? Do managers/employees know what to do in the event of a violent situation?
- C Are employees aware of the Secretary's policy on the prevention of Workplace Violence?

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
REAL PROPERTY

3.04 Real Property

3.04-1 Lease Agreements -Land and Space

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapters I and VIII.

- C Ensure the location has access to a copy of the Real Property Manual 245.1. If not, the Area can be contacted if assistance is needed.
- C Ensure that the LAO/T has a copy of any space or land lease, MOU, or supplemental agreement pertaining to the construction/placement of any ARS-owned buildings at the location, so that the LAO/T is aware of the requirements and restrictions of those documents.
- C Ensure that the LAO/T is aware that ARS may not erect buildings or other structures on non-Federal lands, without obtaining the right to use the land (a lease) for the estimated life of or need for the improvement. (7 CFR §2250a)
- C Determine whether the location made any capital improvements to space not covered by a lease. Since they are not permitted, if any occurred, please so indicate.
- C Ensure the location is aware that Departmental Regulation 1620-2 establishes USDA policy on acquisition, management and disposition of office and related space for USDA owned, leased and GSA-controlled space, and that all USDA agencies must comply with this regulation. The Real Property Management Branch has under its direction a small group of space and building management specialists.

3.04-2 Government Quarters Rentals

Reference, Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter V

- C If the location has quarters, is the LAO/T aware of the responsibilities regarding quarters management? (P&P 245.2)
- C Ensure there is support documentation on file to demonstrate that Government living quarters (quarters) for ARS employees are properly managed and accounted for. Items on file could include:
 - documentation of Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments
 - documentation for Condition of Employment (COE), if there are any COE employees (must be renewed every 5 years)
 - a copy of the most recent appraisal of the quarters, kept at the location (note the date)
- C Ensure that Form ARS-494, Form ARS-4, Certificate of Acceptance, and/or equivalent documents are on file at the Location, signed by the REWO and the employee who is renting the government quarters.
- C Ensure there are periodic inspections & physical inventories being made of the quarters.

- C Review records of the rental receipts account to ensure its use is only for the maintenance and operations of the quarters.

3.04-3 Acquisition

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter VI

- C Does the location have an understanding of Agency policy regarding the acquisition of land and buildings, as well as non-ARS construction on ARS-owned property? (No acquisition shall be made unless provision is made in the applicable appropriation or other law.)

3.04-4 Utilization

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter IX

- C Ensure that land and facilities are utilized in accordance with Agency policy.
- C How is the location conducting its biannual inspection of real property holdings, to ensure the effective use of the property, in support of mission-related activities?
- C Ensure that the Accountable Property Officer maintains the following documents in accordance with his/her responsibilities:
- real property records to reflect custodial responsibility for the real property assigned to the location;
 - physical inventories and any recommendations for adjustments to the official real property records;
 - ensure prevention of encroachments onto ARS lands;
 - ensure construction projects are within legal limitations;
 - complete and forward to the REWO: Form AD-107, "Report of Transfer or Other Disposition or Construction of Property;" Form AD-112, "Report of Unserviceable, Lost, Stolen, Damaged or Destroyed Property;" and Standard Form 118's, "Report of Excess Real Property."

3.04-5 Disposition

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter II

- C Ensure the location is aware that during the APMO's compiling of excess real property package, the location will be asked to develop the "annual protection and maintenance cost" for protecting and maintaining the property while going through excess/surplus/disposal. Has this cost been developed for recent excess projects?
- C Verify that SF-118's, Form AD-112, and Form AD-107 are used for all disposal actions, including disposal of ARS-owned buildings with a value of \$15,000 or less. Is the location sending copies of the forms to the Area Office? (P&P 246.1-ARS)

3.04-6 Easements/Revocable Permits

- C Verify that easements and revocable permits are in place as required, and that they are periodically reviewed and have not expired.
- C Ensure that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (governed by regulations found in 36 CFR Part 800) is being addressed in all revocable permits and easements, when applicable.
- C Ensure that a revocable permit is used for (issued to) all entities utilizing ARS-owned space at the location.
- C Ensure that the LAO/T carefully evaluates requests for the placement of commercial antennas on Federal property, in accordance with GSA Bulletin FPMR D-242, dated 6-11-97, and GSA Bulletin FPMR D-246, dated 2-25-98. Requests of this nature require the issuance of a revocable permit, not an easement.
- Ensure the LAO/T is familiar with the new ARS Bulletin 99-250, “Collection and Use Fees for Revocable Permits and Easements”.
- C When screening requests for easements, is the location ensuring that:
 - the request is a case of necessity,
 - the amount of land requested does not exceed what is required for the purposes of the requested easement,
 - the ARS property is not encumbered by other rights which would be incompatible with the proposed use,
 - the proposed use would not conflict with current or projected ARS programs,
 - the affected ARS property is not on the National Register of Historic Places, and
 - the proposed action would not produce an environmental effect.

3.04-7 Property Management

- C Ensure that the location is aware that compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (governed by regulations found in 36 CFR Part 800) should be addressed in all design and study phases of R&M, modernization, and new construction projects, as well as building demolition, when applicable.
- C Ensure that proper authorization for the construction of buildings/facilities on ARS-owned land by non-Federal entities was granted prior to initiation of the design. In some cases, approval by Congress may be required.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

3.05-1 Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

- C Ensure locations have a written plan for Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM) which includes radiation, biological, and pesticide safety as applicable. The plan should include a policy statement and annual program goals and objectives for eliminating and/or minimizing losses as a result of accidents/incidents involving or producing injury, illness, and property/environmental damage in the ARS workplace. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 9, 25, 26, and 30)
- C Ensure that there is a Safety, Health, and Environmental "State of Location" entry in ARMPS. The entry should include annual goals and objectives the location has developed. (ARMPS Manual/Guidance)
- C Ensure funding for safety, health, and environmental requirements are listed in the ARMPS. Costs for safety, health, and environmental requirements in excess of \$25,000 should be listed in the Procurement Plan of the ARMPS. Costs for safety, health, and environmental requirements less than \$25,000 may appear elsewhere in the ARMPS at the direction of the Area office. If the location is using Hazardous Waste Cleanup funds, those funds should be listed in the HWC HPRL section of the ARMPS. (ARMPS Manual/Guidance and ARS P&P 230.1, Tracking Hazardous Waste Cleanup Funds)
- Ensure applicable safety, health, and environmental laws, regulations, codes and guidance are present in a centralized location available for reference by all employees at all times. Access through the Internet is acceptable if employees are provided with website addresses, a knowledge and/or training on how to use this source, and access to an on-line computer at all times. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 8)
- Ensure required SHEM related materials (i.e. Poster AD-1010, USDA Safety and Health poster; OSHA Form 200, Log and Summary of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses; CA-10, What a Federal Employee Should Do When Injured at Work; and local requirements) are posted on a bulletin board(s) in a conspicuous location(s). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 16)
- C Ensure safety, health, and environmental requirements are taken into consideration during the design and construction process. Location and/or Area SHEM personnel must review designs to ensure they meet SHEM requirements. Such reviews should begin early in the design process to avoid costly changes. (ARS P&P 242.2, Facilities Construction)
- Ensure that locations have assigned personnel to manage and implement the SHEM program. At a minimum, each location must have an assigned Collateral Duty Safety Officer. Locations with 15 or more full time employees must have a safety committee. The safety committee should be representative of the location's employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 17 and 29 CFR 1960, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees).

3.05-2 Safety, Health and Environmental Education/Training

- C Determine if employee position descriptions/performance elements have SHEM related elements. Performance

elements are required for senior management officials, and encouraged for all others. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 10 and DAAM Memo--1992)

- Ensure SHEM education/training is listed on the IDP's of personnel with SHEM roles and responsibilities (ARS Manual 230, Section A, Chapters 10 and 49).
- C Ensure safety, health, and environmental orientation sessions are conducted and documented for new or transferred employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 13, 25, 26, 28 and 29).
- C Determine if location personnel have viewed the appropriate SHEM training videos.
The videos are:
 - “Safety, Health, and Environmental Management, We All Play a Role” - all employees;
 - “Succeeding as a Collateral Duty Officer (CDSO)” - CDSOs;
 - “SHEM: Employees Rights and Responsibilities” - all employees;
 - “Managing Safe Workplaces: Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities” - all supervisors.
 - “ARS Radiation Safety Program” - all employees who work at a facility that use radioactive materials.
 - “ARS Biological Safety Program” - all employees who work at a facility that use biological materials.
- Ensure all completed safety, health, and environmental training is documented. Documentation should be in a centralized location.
- C Determine if the location has an Incentive Awards Program for recognizing SHEM performance. While not required, many locations use such methods to encourage participation in SHEM programs. (ARS Manual 230, Section A, Chapter 14)

3.05-3 Safety Management

- C Ensure the location has standard operating procedures in place and implemented for high risk operations. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 26)
- C Ensure the location provides written notification of potentially hazardous conditions to employees. Management must inform employees about any workplace hazards. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 25)
- C Ensure that the location has a comprehensive Inspection/Abatement Program using ARS Form 404, or similar method. Inspections must be conducted annually by Area or location safety personnel (ASHEMs, CEPS’, CDSOs, and/or Safety Committee members). If a Union is present, ensure a representative has the opportunity to participate in the inspection. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 21)
- C Ensure annual inspection reports and abatement activity documentation is present in a centralized location available for reference by all employees. Inspection reports must be kept on file for five years. Deficiency/abatement notices generated during the inspection must be posted near the hazard until it is corrected. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 21).
- C Ensure the location has an Accident/Incident Investigation and Reporting Program in place. The location must have a file for accident reports and the ensuing investigations.

3.05-4 Industrial Hygiene

- C If chemical, biological, or radiological agents are used, ensure the location has a written Hazard Communication Program. Employees must also receive Hazard Communication Program training. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 13 and 25)
 - Ensure the location maintains an inventory of chemical, biological, or radiological agents, and that the inventory is updated at least annually. The inventory must indicate if the material is hazardous or nonhazardous and be available to employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25)
 - Ensure all hazardous areas and areas containing hazardous materials (i.e. chemical, biological, and radiological agents) are clearly posted and secured. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 25 and 29)
- C Ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are retained and that they are orderly and easily assessable to employees who need them. MSDS are required for all materials that may be harmful to humans such as laboratory chemicals, pesticides, insecticides, cleaning agents, biological agents, radiological agents, etc. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25)
- C Ensure applicable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and its use mandated. Each employees immediate supervisor is responsible for:
 - assessing the need for PPE;
 - providing appropriate PPE to employees;
 - develop standard operating procedures for PPE;
 - train employees on proper use and care;
 - ensure that employees utilize the equipment.(ARS Manual 230, Chapters 21 and 30)
- Ensure location personnel are qualified in first aid and are available on all shifts.

3.05-5 Environmental Management

- C Ensure the location considers safety, health, and the environment in its procurement practices. Specifically, the location should review AD-700's for hazardous substances to determine if:
 - materials are already in stock and available;
 - a less hazardous substance can be substituted;
 - minimal quantities are being ordered.(ARS Manual 230, Chapter 52 and Executive Order 12856)
- Ensure the location has records of hazardous waste determinations for generated wastes and waste analysis on file for unknown wastes. In order to properly document waste disposal, records of waste determinations should be on

file for each type of hazardous waste generated. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 45)

- Ensure the location maintains records on the quantity and types of hazardous waste generated each month. The location must utilize this information to determine and document their generator classification (i.e. conditionally exempt small quantity, small quantity, and large quantity).
- Ensure the location has filed EPA Form 8700-12, “Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity”, with the EPA or State, if applicable. The EPA does not require conditionally exempt small generators to file, however, the State may require the location to file. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 40, 46 and 49, CFR 261.5 and 262.12)
- Ensure the location has written hazardous waste management procedures. This includes procedures for the accumulation of hazardous wastes and the management, handling, and removal of containers. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 46 and 49)
- Determine if the location maintains a log of hazardous wastes inspections. Weekly inspections of hazardous waste storage areas must be conducted for large quantity generators. Small quantity and conditionally exempt small quantity generators are not required to perform such inspections but are encouraged to do so. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 46 and 49)
- Ensure Hazardous Waste Manifests are on file and orderly. In addition, a returned signed copy from the disposal or treatment facility receiving the waste is required. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 46 and 49)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW HUMAN RESOURCES

4.01 Employment

- C Verify that the location provides “walk-in” applicants the information necessary to send an application to the appropriate HRD servicing branch. It is advised not to maintain any applications because the authority to maintain application files has not been delegated from OPM.
- Unsolicited applications (those not submitted in response to a specific vacancy announcement) received at the location for permanent positions in the competitive service are date-stamped, or the date of receipt of application should be notated in ink. These applications should be immediately forwarded to the Recruitment, Employment and Outreach Staff, REE Policy Branch, which will provide the individual with a packet of materials and instructions for applying for permanent positions. These applications may not be retained at the location. It is recommended that the location acknowledge receipt of the applicant of the referral to HRD.
 - Applications for L/A and student positions (nonpermanent positions in the excepted service) may be circulated and filed at the location if the LAO has delegated employment authority.
 - Applications for Postdoctoral positions (excepted service positions) may be submitted to the individual specified in the Postdoc listing and retained until a selection is made.
- C Are all employees able to access the ARS vacancy listings on the HRD Home Page? (A vacancy listing should be posted weekly if employees do not have access to the Home Page.)
- C Has the servicing personnel management specialist adequately explained the options in filling positions and responded to any questions and concerns? Is the selecting official satisfied with the outcome? [A variety of competitive staffing procedures (Merit Promotion, Alternate Merit Promotion and DEMO) are available to fill positions on a permanent basis].
- C Verify that supervisors are aware that probationary periods for Category 1 scientists hired under the Demo authority is 3 years.
- C Determine if the location is experiencing any difficulties in hiring employees in excepted positions (those which do not require advertising) in the areas listed below. If delegated authority has been granted to any employee at the location for L/A and STEP, has there been any difficulty in appointing and “completing” the personnel actions.
- L/A Authority
 - Using student appointments -- Student Career Experience Program, Student Temporary Employment Program
 - Research Associates
 - Veterans Readjustment Act (VRA) Program
 - Persons with disabilities

[References: L/A and STEP Handbook, dated March 1999]

- C Verify that students are enrolled in school on a full time or part time basis. [This can be done by requesting a copy of their transcripts once or twice per year, or by requesting verification of enrollment through the registrar's office. Note: If a student stops going to school at least on a half-time basis as defined by the institution, the location should initiate an SF 52 to terminate the appointment (although a break in service may be an option). Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]
- C Ensure HRD has approved the content of paid ads for recruiting efforts. [Purchase order files should contain the necessary approvals. Reference PPD Memorandum, Approval of Paid Advertisements, dated June 8, 1995.]
- C Has the location experienced any difficulties in completing appropriate incentive/travel forms for new hires? [Reference P&P 412.5, Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay.] Is the location using the new REE forms that are available on the HRD WordPerfect Forms website (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/afm/hrd/hrdhomepage/wpforms.htm>)?
- C Verify if temporary appointments in the competitive service (those which require advertising) are being used. [If so, have they been made to meet short term needs due to absences of permanent employees, due to permanent funding concerns, or to complete a project? Management should be aware of the restrictions on the repetitious use of temporary appointment in the competitive service -- a temporary appointment to a position that had been filled by temporary appointments for 24 of the previous 36 months is prohibited. Reference 5CFR316.401(c)(2).]
- C Does the location use private sector temporaries and is the location aware of the proper procedures to follow? [Reference PPD Policy Memorandum 37-01, Use of Private Sector Temporaries, dated August 22, 1996.]
- C What outreach efforts, if any, have been made to advertise the welfare to work program? [New hires should be asked to complete OPM Form 1635, Welfare to Work Program, and the completed forms should be handled confidentially with no review at the location.]
- C Are retired scientists on collaborator appointments being reappointed annually? Have there been any problems in processing the appointments, including the completion of the financial disclosure form? [Reference PD (HRD) Memorandum, Collaborator Appointments, dated May 25, 1990.]
- C Determine if there are any problems with retirement/separation procedures. [Reference P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures, October 1998.]
- Exit interviews should be conducted. Exit interview questionnaires are sent out by Headquarters and are to be returned to Headquarters.
 - AD-581s for lump sum payments should be forwarded for processing within 2 weeks of the employee's last day of work.
 - Separating employees should be given an SF 8.
 - A copy of the separating employee's SF 52 should be E-mailed to the Frick Company (note: this may be accomplished at the Area rather than the location).
 - Retirement paperwork should be sent directly to the Retirement and Benefits Staff for processing (this may by

accomplished by the Area rather than the location).

- C Verify that employee paper records are safeguarded in locked file cabinets with restricted access. Records should contain only documents necessary to the function of the office. No information other than “public information” (i.e., Name, Title, Pay Plan, Series, Grade, Pay Rate and Duty Location) may be released without the employee’s consent. [P&P 158.1, Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Guidelines, and CFR 293.]
- C Does the location understand when an SF 52 should be prepared. [Reference DIR 411.2, Preparing & Approving Requests for Personnel Action, SF 52, dated 4/16/92.]
 - Verify “details” are being documented with the SF-52.
- C Determine if the location routinely receives timely reports on NTE dates from HRD and/or the Area, and how they keep track of time limited appointments and other NTE dates. Have any problems been experienced in initiating appropriate personnel actions?
- C Is the location familiar with the Career Transition Assistance Regulations and the impact of these regulations in filling competitive service vacancies for 121 days or more? Does the location have any surplus employees? Have the HRD efforts in providing transition services to location surplus employees been satisfactory?
- C If volunteers are used at the location, do they have signed agreements on file and are records of service being maintained? This includes documentation of days and number of hours worked. [Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]

4.02 Time and Attendance

- C Verify that all employees (with the exception of intermittent who should not have a regular work schedule) have an established tour of duty approved by the supervisor. [The tour of duty (for full time employees) should constitute 80 hours per pay period scheduled in advance with the work schedule approved by the supervisor on ARS-331 (part time employees would schedule and work the designated number of hours less than 80). Reference P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules.]
- C Verify with timekeepers and supervisors that changes in types of employment/change in work schedules from/to full time, part time or intermittent are not changed on the T&A until a personnel action (initiated by an SF-52) has been approved and processed by HRD.
- C Verify that employees and timekeepers are initialing, and supervisors are signing each PC-TARE T&A. The ARS-331 is the source document for the PC-TARE T&A, therefore, all time in pay and non-pay status should be consistent on both documents. [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time and Attendance Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions, dated 3/97 and P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules, dated September 16, 1997.]
- C Verify that all credit and/or compensatory time is being recorded on T&A’s and is accounted for.

- C Review backup documents such as ARS-331, SF-71 (Request For Leave Or Approved Absence), Medical Certificates, Military or Court orders, and approvals to work for overtime. [SF-71s should reflect the amount of leave used on the ARS-331. However, not all supervisors require an SF-71, therefore check location policy. Medical Certificates usually are not necessary unless sick leave used exceeds 3 days. In all cases, neither Military nor Court leave should be used without specific orders. Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]

- C Review T&A information for leave used under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Federal Employees Family Friendly Leave Act (FEFFLA) as follows:
 - FMLA is an entitlement to up to 12 weeks of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) (annual and/or sick leave may be substituted as appropriate) during any 12 month period to care for a family member. LWOP is coded as Transaction Code (TC) 71 for PC-TARE processing and all time must be maintained in a cumulative manual record.
 - FEFFLA allows employees to use up to 104 hours of sick leave (prorated for part time employees) each leave year as long as the employee maintains a sick leave balance of at least 80 hours (if less, only 40 hours can be used) for care of a family member, or for bereavement. TC 62 (sick leave used) with the prefix 62 (FEFFLA) is used in PC-TARE processing.]

- C Verify in the T&A records for call-back overtime work situations. [If an employee is called back to work unexpectedly for additional duty later in the workday or on a day that was not originally scheduled as a workday, overtime is credited for a minimum of 2 hours. (whether 1 minute or 2 hours is actually worked). After the first 2 hours the individual would earn overtime as it was actually worked. Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay.]

- C Verify and review instances of leave cancellation/restoration and its use. [On occasion employees have annual leave restored that had been forfeited at the end of the leave year. Each instance of restoration must be approved by the HRD, REE Policy Branch Chief and a copy of that approval should be in the T&A file. The restored annual leave must be used in the time frame allotted in the approval letter. If not used within the allotted time, it will be forfeited. Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]

- C Verify that certified T&A reports and the supporting documentation are being retained for 6 years. [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time and Attendance Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions, dated 3/97.]

- C Ensure that the timekeeper(s) have current T&A Manuals that reflect the most recent NFC changes. Timekeepers should be sufficiently trained to fulfill their job requirements. [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time and Attendance Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions, dated 3/97, and NFC Procedures: Title VI, NFC Systems Access Procedures, Chapter 10, Time and Attendance Remote Entry, Section 2, PC-TARE (for Timekeepers), 3/90.]

- C Check to see if any employees are listed on the NFC TIME 4004 Report, Leave Error Report. If so, has an AD-717, Leave Audit, been completed to resolve the leave error? Review leave reconciliation/audits. [Leave reconciliation/audits must be conducted in three situations:
 - When an employee has a discrepancy in leave balances between the NFC data base and the PC-TARE information;

- When an employee is an approved recipient of the Leave Transfer Program;
- When an employee separates/retires from the Agency and there is a discrepancy as stated above.
- To certify correctness of an audit, the ORIGINAL SIGNATURE of the audited employee's supervisor along with DATE is required on all audits (AD-717). The Supervisor's signing of the leave audit certifies correctness of the audit consistent with their personal knowledge. An accurate leave audit includes explanatory notes as necessary. Leave audits should be completed by the end of the next pay period for reported leave imbalances, as listed on the TIME 4004 Report. An open leave audit should be ongoing for any employee who is an approved recipient in the Leave Transfer Program. A leave audit should be conducted and certified by the supervisor at the end of the same pay period of the separation/retirement.
- Ensure the locations are sending Lump sum payments/leave audits (AD581/AD-717) for Retirement to the Retirement and Benefits Staff.

4.03 Pay and Leave

- C Review the use of overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, and credit hours. Verify that the overtime and compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime have been approved in advance. Verify that credit hours earned have been approved by the established location procedure. Verify that the approving person had the authority to approve the extra hours of work. [Consider whether or not normal workload is planned and organized in order to minimize the need for overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, and credit hours. Consider why the extra time is being worked, and the frequency or pattern of use. Is the overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, and credit hours the result of: under staffing; uneven distribution of work; special project; or a lack of certain skills?]
- C Verify that employees and supervisors understand the differences between overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, and credit time as follows:
 - Overtime worked and compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime must: exceed 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week; be officially ordered or approved (employees cannot approve their own overtime); be performed by an employee; be documented in writing; be attached to the T&A Log; and be in addition to the normal daily or weekly work requirement.
 - Credit hours are all hours in excess of an employee's basic work requirement which the employee elects to work and the supervisor approves so as to vary the length of the workweek or a workday. Credit hours must not be used before they are earned; cannot be earned on a holiday during the hours that correspond to the employee's regularly scheduled hours for that day; and cannot be earned by intermittent employees.

[Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay, and P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules.]

- C Verify that supervisors/employees understand the administration of leave as follows:
 - administrative leave (which is usually applied uniformly in an organization), advance of sick leave, and the advance of annual leave. [Advanced sick leave and advanced annual leave must be requested with justification. The advance of sick leave is limited to 240 hours. The advance of

annual leave is limited to the amount of annual leave that the employee can earn during the remainder of the current leave year. Employees with NTE dates are eligible for advance sick leave not-to-exceed the amount of sick leave they will learn in the remaining period of employment.]

- C Are any employees on leave restriction? [Upon review, if indications of suspected leave abuse are noted (e.g., low leave balances, patterns [the Monday after pay day], frequent requests for emergency leave), determine if the supervisor discussed the issue with the employee, and the servicing employee relations specialist. Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]
- C Verify if employees are aware of using the Leave Transfer Program. [If so, do supervisors, timekeepers, and employees understand their responsibilities and required actions? Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]
- C Verify that supervisors are aware an SF-52 must be initiated for any LWOP request that will exceed 30 consecutive days [Reference P&P 402.6, Leave].
- C Verify that the location understands that full time employees do not accrue annual or sick leave during any pay period in a leave year in which they accumulate a total of 80 hours of LWOP. Also, verify with supervisors that terminal annual leave is only allowable in certain circumstances and they notify timekeepers when applicable. [Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]
- C Determine if Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) nonexempts are being paid for attending training outside working hours. [This is only appropriate if the training is to bring the employee up to an acceptable level of competence, provides the employee knowledge necessary to perform duties, or the employee is directed to participate. Each employee's AD-332, Position Description Cover Sheet identifies the position as FLSA exempt or nonexempt. Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay.]

4.04 Performance Management

[Reference DIR 418.3, ARS Performance Appraisal System, dated 5/21/92]

- C Review a sampling of performance standards for currency, relevancy to the position, and appropriate signatures and dates.
- C Verify that performance standards have been in place at least 90 days before being rated.
- C Verify that there are three, but not more than 10 elements (of which there must be at least one critical and one non-critical element).
- C Verify that the elements generally reflect the major duties of the position description.
- C Are the standards observable and measurable? [In other words, do they measure results and/or outcomes without using numerical measurements -- except in unusual circumstances.]
- C Verify that midyear progress reviews are conducted and documented.

- C Verify that annual performance ratings are completed within established time frames (within 30 days of the end of the rating cycle).
- C Verify that a separate critical element addressing EEO/CR is included in each supervisor's performance standards. [Positions classified as supervisor usually include the term Supervisory, Supervisor, Manager, Officer, or Administrator in the title.]
- C Verify that EEO/CR standards are incorporated in a critical element (typically communications/customer service) in each non-supervisor's performance standard.
- C Verify that a performance element includes health, safety, environmental protection and/or energy management standards for those having such responsibilities.

4.05 Training

- C Review a sampling of IDP's, which are required by the Department. Determine if the IDP's are a joint effort on the part of the supervisor and employee and if they are updated annually. [Reference P&P 440.1, Employee Training and Development.]
- C Determine at what level training requests are approved, and whether or not this is consistent with the delegation of authority. The location should have a copy of the approved SF-182's. [Reference P&P 440.1, Employee Training and Development.]
- C Review the processing of the SF-182 (including for group training) to verify that they are being completed properly and the information is documented into TRAI. If there are instances of long term (120 days or more) non-Government training, verify that proper approval has been obtained and the continued service agreements have been calculated and signed (reference P&P 440.1)
- C Has the organization provided any supervisory, leadership or team building type training on its own initiative (reference 5CFR412)?
- C What training references are available? Do employees currently receive training information and know they can obtain information from the HRD Employee Development Section, and its SMART Center? [The SMART Center is a lending resource library available to all REE employees. It consists of over 800 books, videos, and cassettes on various subjects ranging from computer skills to leadership skills. Located at 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Room 4-1171, employees may contact the Center Manager on (301)504-1428 or fax requests on (301)504-4422. The SMART Center's website address: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/afm/hrd/hrdhomepage/SmartCtr/catalog.htm>.]

- C Review the employee orientation procedures followed and determine if assistance is needed. Does each new employee receive a copy of the Ethics Orientation Training package, and are they given 1 hour of time to review its contents (reference DIR 412.2, dated 7/1/91. Also, review program for its content; it may be worthy of sharing with other locations)?

4.06 Position Description/Management

- C Verify that the location and supervisors are maintaining the official position description copies certified by Headquarters, and all employees have position descriptions that reflect current duties and responsibilities. Are collateral duty statements contained in position descriptions when appropriate? [Collateral duties should less than 25% of the employees time and be identified in position descriptions if they are regular and recurring.] (P&P 431.1)
- C How are new scientists and supervisors of new Category 1 scientists oriented to the RPES system? Are all new Category 1 scientists provided with a copy of the RPES P&P and Manual? [Reference P&P 431.3, Position Classification - Research Position Evaluation System, dated 2/20/96, and MAN 431.3, Position Classification - Research Position Evaluation Manual, dated 2/20/96.]
- C Verify that the ARS-produced videos are being shown at the location and are being used in the orientation of all Category 1 scientists and that copies of the RPES brochure series have been distributed to all Category 1 scientists and supervisors/RL's.
- C Do supervisors understand the procedures for writing position descriptions and for requesting desk audits? Do they know whom to call with questions?
- C Verify that supervisors understand the responsibility for assigning work and certifying to the accuracy of the position description.
- C Are managers aware that standard position descriptions exist on the Internet for many occupational series that are common in ARS? [Standard position descriptions are maintained on the HRD Homepage.]

4.07 Employee and Labor Relations

- C Verify that supervisors/managers understand disciplinary or adverse action procedures. Determine if there have been any employee relations issues within the past 2 years. If so, were they addressed? Were they resolved? Was the HRD Employee Relations Branch contacted? Were any problems encountered in the process? Do supervisors know the difference between performance and conduct based actions? Does the location have a current listing of who to contact for information? Are supervisors aware that the authority to propose and decide conduct and performance actions has been delegated to the Area?
- C Is the location aware of alternative discipline in employee relations issues? Has the location used Alternative Discipline in Employee Relations issues? [Reference USDA, OHRM Personnel Bulletin 751.3, Alternative Discipline, dated 6/3/98.]
- C Has the Cooperative Resolution Program (CRP) been publicized at the location and is information available to employees? [Information is available on the AFM Homepage. Do employees know who to contact if they are

interested in requesting mediation? If the program has been used, what was the result?]

- C Does the location follow the outside employment and conflict of interest requirements found in Personnel Bulletin No. 735-1, USDA Employee Responsibilities and Conduct? [Verify that each employee has received a copy of 735-1. All employees who file a public or confidential financial disclosure report must obtain approval, ARS-101A, prior to any involvement of outside employment. For more information visit the REE HRD Ethics Website at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/afm/hrd/hrdhomepage/ethics/ethics.htm>.
- C Verify that Ethics Advisor lists (names and phone numbers) are either posted or readily available to all employees, and are updated at least annually. Is annual ethics training provided? Does location have Standard of Ethical Conduct and Ethics Desk Reference available for employees' review?
- C Are any Federal employees represented by a union? If so, has a Partnership Council been established? Has there been any other union activity during the past year? [Reference DIR 464.2, Labor-Management Relations, dated 4/17/85.]
- C Has anyone been subpoenaed to testify? Are the procedures for handling subpoena requests known? [Reference REE Bulletin 97-401, Service of Summons, Subpoenas, and Witness Testimony, dated 8/11/97.]

4.08 Awards

[Reference: USDA Guide for Employee Recognition Handbook, July 1994]

- C Are employees aware of the ARS Employee Recognition Program?
- C Is the incentive awards program, including spot and time off awards, being used at the location?
- C Are performance awards submitted in a timely fashion? [In general, performance awards should be given within 60-90 days of the end of the appraisal period. Reference: Performance and Awards Update #98-1, May 8, 1998]
- C Is the Suggestion Program in use? How is it publicized? Have any employees ever suggested changes in the way work is being done in the office? If so, how have they been handled?
- C Is the delegation of authority for approval of awards followed? Is there a delegation of authority from the Area Director to those who are approving awards?
- C Are employees satisfied with the type and amount of recognition they receive? Do they feel awards are presented to the most deserving employees?
- C Are criteria in place to assure fairness among employees when recognizing /granting awards?
- C Is there a pattern in the approval of awards? Are the same employees receiving them all the time? Are only higher graded employees receiving awards? Are there unusual differences in the amounts of the awards among awardees?

- Ⓒ Are employees, managers, supervisors, and teams/groups recognized for demonstrating superior equal employment opportunity accomplishments?
- Are AD-287 forms being initialed and sent to HRD for Spot Awards?
- Are AD-287 forms for Spot Awards being initiated with the required PCMS check information (date of check, check number, and the name of the person holding the checking account on which payment is made)?
- Are AD-287 forms initiated with two levels of approval (AD-287 forms must have signatures of the recommending individual and the approving official)?

4.09 Other

- Ⓒ Are employees at the location aware of HR systems such as TALX, EMPLOYEE EXPRESS, AND NFC PERSONAL PAGE?
- Ⓒ Are employees aware that HRD has a Homepage at www.ars.usda.gov/afm/hrd/?
- Ⓒ Verify that standard footnotes are identified on the PSP such as collateral duties, research associate positions, exigency employees for hazardous weather and budget shutdowns have been identified in ARMPS (i.e., footnote "m1" and "m2," respectively).
- Ⓒ Verify that the location has a hazardous weather dismissal plan and it is readily available to and understood by the employees. [Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]
- Ⓒ Has the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) been publicized at the location? The contact information should be readily available (e.g., posted on an official bulletin board). EAP information should be distributed at least annually. Have all employees been offered a briefing in the last 2 years? Is there a funding amount in ARMPS?
- Ⓒ Is the Occupational Health and Maintenance Program (OHMP) being utilized at the location? (Employee participation is not required but should be encouraged). Are OHMP results of employee medical examinations being forwarded to the Medical Review Officer (USPHS-DFOH) by the local provider? [Reference Manual 230.0-ARS, Safety, health & Environmental Management Program.]
- Ⓒ Determine if Workman's Compensation claims forms are available. Verify that procedures to submit claims forms were followed. Verify that the timekeeper understands how to handle Continuation of Pay. [Forms are on the web "www.dol.gov/dol/esa/owcp.htm". Reference 20 CFR, Part 10, and 5 USC, Chapter 81.]
- Ⓒ Determine if flexible workplace arrangements have been used for any employees, and whether or not there were any problems. [Reference DIR 402.3, dated 5/29/92.]
- Ⓒ Are official bulletin boards properly maintained? [Reference DIR 243.2, Signs, Office Identification, Building Directories, & Bulletin Boards, dated 3/13/87.]

- Ⓒ Does the location understand which documents must be sent to HRD for processing (e.g., Direct Deposit, CFC, Dues Deductions)? Is Employee Express being advertised/promoted to employees?
- Ⓒ Are IRIS, PINQ, and Personnel FOCUS information available to the Administrative Office? If not, would access be helpful? Has sufficient training been provided to ensure the location is able to maximize use of these NFC programs/applications? [The NFC Homepage address is “<http://www.nfc.usda.gov/>”]
- Ⓒ Has the location developed any local Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) or Desk Manuals on human resources related activities. If so, request a copy.
- Ⓒ Has the location experienced problems in hiring or providing placement for noncitizen scientists, e.g., obtaining visas? [Information is available on the Internet at “<http://www.ars.usda.gov/hrd/hrdhomepage/eon.htm>”]

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW INFORMATION SYSTEMS ACTIVITIES

Additional information on the subjects in this section can be found at the ITD Homepage:

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/itd/itdpage.htm>

There is a growing concern within the Government about threats to information resources. Attacks by computer hackers and computer viruses have become more and more common within ARS. Computer hackers have compromised web sites at various ARS research locations in the last year. In each case, we were lucky that the hackers only chose to replace the main web page and announce to the world that they had compromised our sites. If they had wished to be more malicious, they could have destroyed or modified research databases located on that web site. It is a known fact that, over 60% of the Agencies' security problems are internal. People are either unknowing, unwilling, or not trained to address Information System Security. This year's CARE program will once again emphasize more on Information Systems Security.

5.01 AFM Systems

C Is the location's information in the REE Directory up-to-date?

The REE Directory contains information on all ARS employees. Each location should verify personnel and locator information on the Internet (currently located at <http://www.reeusda.gov/ree/reedir/>) and submit needed updates. Contact the ACS for assistance.

5.02 Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications

- Are the location's employees aware of the costs associated with using the various location's telecommunications services? If so, how? GAO is currently conducting a USDA survey to determine whether the agencies have a handle on their telecommunications costs as a total and at each location. A possible repercussion of this survey will be the need to start tracking the locations' telecommunication expenditures in the near future. The following is a list of the type of expenditure examples:

Voice examples: monthly telephone line rental; local telephone dialing usage (via telephone, fax, or modem) such as tolls, message units, directory assistance; and long distance dialing usage (via telephone, fax, or modem) such as in-state, out-of-state, and international. The rental of the telephone lines and the local and long distance usage of those lines may be from two or more vendors.

Data example: monthly data line rental and usage via a commercial vendor, FTS2000, FTS2001, or a third party.

Video example: monthly video line rental and usage via a commercial vendor, FTS2000, FTS2001, or a third party.

E-mail (Internet) example: monthly data line rental and usage via a commercial vendor, FTS2001, or a third

party.

- C Has the location included a forecast of dedicated telecommunications acquisitions (circuits, routers, telephone systems) in their ARMPS package?

ARS locations are required to forecast planned acquisitions of dedicated telecommunications services and equipment via the ARMPs each fiscal year (see Administrator's ARMP kickoff letter).

- C Has the location received approval from their Area Computer Specialist (ACS) and the Information Technology Division (ITD) before ordering forecasted telecommunications equipment and service? (See the REE Centralized Telecommunications Management Plan (CTMP), dated 30 April 1997, and the USDA Telecommunications Network Stabilization and Migration Program (TNSMP).

- C Has the location obtained a waiver from USDA's Chief Information Officer before acquiring dedicated telecommunications equipment and service that was not forecasted?

If a location didn't forecast a dedicated item that they now need, they must work through their ACS and the ITD to obtain a waiver from the CIO (see the TNSMP).

- C Does the location share telecommunications services and equipment with co-located USDA sites?

Locations are required to share services and equipment with other USDA agencies if possible when the following three criteria are met: 1) cost-effective; 2) functionally effective; and 3) the agencies are sharing the same building or campus of buildings. The location must work through their ACS and the ITD to review such possibilities (see the TNSMP).

- C Does the location use GSA's AT&T FTS2000 or MCI FTS2001 contracts for long distance telecommunications services? If not, does it have an approved exception from the ITD?

The FTS2000 contract has been a mandatory contract over the past 10 years for most long distance voice, data, and video services. This contract will expire 12/6/00 and is being replaced by the FTS2001 contract which was activated 10/1/99. ARS locations are currently transitioning to the FTS2001 contract for voice, data, and video services. Certain locations can not transition because they are using university or state services that are mandatory for that location. The CARE team should note exceptions in the report with the reason the location is not using the FTS2000 or FTS2001 contract.

- C Does the location use the mandatory MCI FTS2001 long-distance calling cards? Does the location still have any AT&T FTS2000 or commercial calling cards?

All AT&T FTS2000 and commercial calling cards must be canceled and replaced with MCI FTS2001 calling cards to make domestic and international long distance calls. Each employee at a location can have an individual MCI FTS2001 calling card with his or her name on the card. Cards should not be

shared or pooled. To order a calling card or to cancel an existing calling card, contact the Area Office's Property Officer.

C Does the location use USDA's contract with VoiceCom for voice mail services?

USDA has a voice mail services contract with VoiceCom that is mandatory for Washington D.C. and surrounding areas, and mandatory for consideration for all other locations. Contact the Area Office and ITD for information and help conducting a cost benefit analysis.

C Has the location used the GSA Federal Wireless Contract to acquire cellular or pager service or the MCI FTS2001 contract to acquire pager service?

The GSA Federal Wireless and the GSA MCI FTS2001 contracts are not mandatory for these services but locations should compare costs on these contracts prior to ordering equipment or service elsewhere. Contact the Area Office and ITD for further information and cost benefit analysis support.

C Is the location authorized to use radio Frequencies?

If the location uses radios, telemetry or GPS equipment, they must have authorization for a Government radio frequency on file (per USDA DR 3300-1 and ARS Directive 260.1). Locations may not use non-government frequencies, such as those with radios purchased from Radio Shack. The use of Non-Government radio frequencies that are licensed to local Public Safety or University organizations are not to be used unless there is a Letter of Mutual Aid issued to the ARS location from the local government entity on file with the ARS Frequency Manager and NTIA. The ARS Frequency Manager will take care of requesting a frequency authorization once he is in receipt of the Mutual Aid Memo. Prior to the purchase of any radios, the location must have a Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA). Based on NTIA and USDA Directives, existing RFA's must be reviewed every 5 years. With the upcoming mandatory Federal radio usage migration from WideBand to NarrowBand all RFA's will be reviewed and equipment inventoried to ascertain the replacement costs of all radio equipment utilized within ARS. Contact the APMO or ARS Radio Frequency Manager for further information.

C Has the acquisition of two-way video equipment been approved by the USDA Chief Information Officer (CIO)?

USDA DR 3300-1 Appendix E requires locations to consider sharing existing Federal Government video facilities before acquiring new equipment. If there is already equipment at a location, but sharing is not feasible, the location must send a proposal through the APMO and the Information Technology Division to the USDA/OCIO for approval.

5.03 Information Systems Security

• Has a Security Point of Contact been assigned at the location?

P&P 253.3, "ARS Information Systems Security Program", states that a Security Point of Contact must be assigned at each ARS location by the Area Administrative Officers, with the assistance from Location Coordinators.

The Security Point of contact serves as primary security liaison with the ACS/Deputy Security Officer and the Headquarters Information System Security Officer.

- Has information about the Security Point of Contact been provided to the Agency Information Systems Security Program Manager and if so, is it current?

The ARS Office of the CIO keeps a current file of all after duty security Points of Contact in the event a security incident occurs after hours. The following information can be electronically sent to bkeen@ars.usda.gov or grich@ars.usda.gov:

- Name of contact/s
- Work number
- After hours number
- Pager (if applicable)
- Cell number (if applicable)
- E-mail address
- Platforms: Server/PC type, software, html editor
- Operating system and version

- C Does the location access the Internet through the USDA Internet Access Network (IAN) or another approved means?

The IAN refers to the departmental backbone. Most locations in ARS gain Internet access through a local service or university. Because of this, the location is usually at the discretion of the provider for any if at all security measures to prevent unauthorized intrusions. If Internet access is through any means other than the USDA IAN, such as a commercial Internet Service Provider (ISP) or university, DR-3300-1, "Telecommunications & Internet Services and Use, Appendix I, Internet", requires a technical waiver be obtained. The waiver request must be submitted through the Area Computer Specialist (ACS) and the AFM ITD to the OCIO for approval. Contact the ACS for assistance.

- C If the location accesses the Internet through a method other than the USDA IAN, what security measures are in place to protect information resources from the Internet?

If the location is using a local provider or university there is a good chance they will not know what security measures in place. Please note any findings in the final report. DR 3140-2 establishes minimum security requirements for the use of the Internet network by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This regulation is not written to restrict the use of the Internet, but to ensure that adequate protection is in place to protect USDA data from intruders, file tampering, break in, and service disruption. USDA Agencies and staff offices that use the Internet must adhere to guidance in DR 3140-1 USDA IRM Security Policy.

- Has a security plan been developed for each general support system and major application within the location and submitted to the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer ?

The requirement is to update and submit this plan annually. P&P 253.3, “ARS Information Systems Security Program” states that, at a minimum, security plans must be developed for each general support system and major application identified in accordance with OMB Circular No. A-130, Appendix III, and NIST Special Publication 800-18. This past year ARS established a standard format for all ARS security plans to use. The guideline for developing ARS Information Systems Security Plans is entitled “User Guide for Developing and Evaluation Security Plans for Unclassified Federal Automated Information Systems,” (the guideline) Draft Version 6.03, dated July 18, 1997.” This guideline can be downloaded from the AFM Download Site located at <http://ftp.afm.ars.usda.gov/>. This document provides excellent guidance and is used Government-wide. Security plans are due to the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) on March 1 of each year.

- If a location’s information technology is managed by a university, is there some type of Agreement in place (i.e. Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding ((MOA))((MOU))/Research Support Agreement ((RSA))/Service Level Agreement)?

Any Agency system that maintains and processes sensitive information is required to establish some type of agreement to protect the security interests of that system. Appropriate steps are needed to ensure that a agreement is in place or is being developed to address the security requirements of that system. Without an agreement in place, the accountable ARS official of the system is stating they accept the level of risks associated with that system.

- What Information Security practices does the location follow?
- Does the location have rules of behavior?

Draft Rules of Behavior have been developed by the ARS CIO’s office which identify specific rules and responsibilities applicable to all Agency system users. This draft will result in a formal Agency P&P.

- What procedures does the location follow when reporting a security incident?
- Does the location have a copy of the Agency’s security incident procedures?

Procedures have been developed by the ARS CIO’s office which identifies the steps and actions to be taken by systems administrators when a security incident occurs.

- Do employees know how to report or recognize misuse of IS resources?

ARS realizes that security training to users, systems, and network administrators beyond providing periodic security bulletins and notices regarding recent news, events, and alerts has been minimal. We also recognize the need to provide, at a minimum, basic awareness and security training to all ARS employees and Administrators. A plan to develop a Security Awareness Program to better educate all ARS employees regarding their responsibilities for protecting Agency IT resources is being initiated.

A major component of this Program will be the implementation of a WEB-based security awareness training program which will be taken annually by all ARS employees. The possibility of expanding our use of electronic media for sharing security related news and information will be explored. Specifically, we will consider the establishment of a security bulletin board to allow Agency System Administrators and users to exchange tips and experiences regarding relevant security matters. We will also utilize our electronic mailing lists to better direct our security alerts and notices to the appropriate audiences.

- Does the location have a contingency plan?

Maintain a contingency plan that documents actions to be followed before, during, and after the disruption of operations. This question is asked in the security plan. Most locations probably do not have a contingency plan in place in the advent of disruption of operations such as fire, flood, etc. If it was not addressed in the location's security plans they need to develop one.

- Does the location keep an inventory of it's IT equipment?

Maintain an accurate inventory of sensitive IT equipment. Typically, IT equipment has a life cycle, for example, a PC's life cycle is approximately three years. If an inventory is not maintained then what measures does the location use to track life cycles of ADP equipment.

- Does the location verify user IDs annually against the personnel listing to ensure that terminated or transferred employees no longer have access rights?

The concern here is to address LAN and NFC userid's. NFC has implemented procedures where they compare userid's to the personnel databases and if they do not match they delete them.

- Does the location have Risk Analysis Procedures?

The ARS CIO office is in the process of evaluating available risk assessment methodologies and anticipates implementing a methodology for ARS-wide use in the year 2000. Once a methodology has been implemented, a plan and schedule will be developed to ensure that risk assessments are conducted and mitigation strategies are developed for all ARS major applications and general support systems. That plan and schedule will be reflected in the updated systems security plans.

Information Security Policy Compliance Self-Assessment

All locations should conduct an Information Systems Security Assessment to identify the location's security of information and its vulnerabilities. The following assessment provides a self-awareness and training tool for ARS to informally review the internal IT security setting within their locations. This Self-Assessment is designed to be one method of identifying agency information technology areas that are vulnerable to intrusion from a trusted insider or outside source. An honest evaluation heightens the location's awareness to security issues they may or may not have given thought to and also assists in the development and refinement of their information systems security plan. The intent of this self-assessment is not to criticize or ridicule the location of their security measures but to provide the location with best practices and the Agency with meaningful feedback for proactive corrective actions in our

Information System Security Program.

Information System Security

- Does the location have a system or network administrator assigned full time?
- Has the system or network administrator been trained for assigned duties?
- Has the system or network administrators received security training?
- Are systems tested for software vulnerabilities?
- Are usernames and passwords required?
- Do passwords have expiration dates?
- Do passwords have a minimum length?
- Are warning banners installed on all systems?
- Are backups stored securely?
- Is there a hardware and software configuration control process in place?
- Is someone assigned the responsibility for installing system patches?
- Are patches re-installed after a software update, as necessary?
- Are systems tested for software/security fixes?
- Does the system administrator download patch and service pack information?
- Are factory-installed passwords changed on new equipment immediately upon installation?

Computer Software Piracy

- Are procedures in place to ensure that only authorized and properly licensed software is installed on individual PC's and the network?
- Are software copyright laws enforced?
- Is all software inventoried?
- Are location personnel educated regarding copyrights, using licensed software?

Orientation and Check-out

- Does the location address information security in New Employee Orientation Program?
- Does the location provide a security briefing to new employees and contractors which explains information security responsibilities?
- Are check-out procedures in place so that employees turn in security-related ID's and data when access is no longer required?

Information Systems Virus protection.

- Does the location have virus-checking software installed and operational on servers and individual PC's?
- Is virus software and signature files updated on a regular schedule?
- Are diskettes from outside sources scanned?
- Are downloaded software and files scanned?
- Are employees aware of reporting requirements in the event of a virus?
- Are employees alerted to specific Virus threats, i.e. Melissa, Trojan Horse?

Data Integrity/Modification/disclosure.

- Have your users identified data sensitivity?
- Is sensitive data protected from disclosure?
- Are data rights (read, write, world & etc.) enforced?

- Do you have procedures to revoke access?
- Is there proper protection for magnetic media?
- Are there sanitation procedures for when magnetic media is no longer required?
- When someone attempts to access data for which they do not have permission is it recorded?

Network/Internet Security.

- Do you have any local policy or guidelines for agency networks?
- Are any Firewalls installed?
- Are rules set for firewall traffic allowed or disallowed?
- Is any Intrusion Detection Software installed?
- Are passwords required for network access?
- Is any encryption software installed for information identified as sensitive?
- Are dial-in services allowed?
- Have all modems been disconnected?

Protection of IS resources.

- Is access to ADP equipment, facilities, and systems limited to authorized personnel only?
- What physical security measures are in place?
- Are employees aware on how to report missing, loss or stolen IS resources, if so to whom?
- Is access to building entrance controlled?
- Are personal identification badges required?
- Do you have a visitor control program?
- Is an inventory of computer equipment maintained/updated?
- Are computer room and office doors locked after normal working hours?
- Do you have any policy addressing Laptop security?

Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) or Research Support Agreements (RSA) with USDA entities or other Organizations and Federal Agencies.

- Are respective agency security requirements defined?
- Is this document signed by all concerned?
- Is it clear who is responsible for network connections?
- Do any systems require contingency plans by the other organization?
- Are security points of contact identified?
- Are all shared resources identified?
- Is mission/function for connections clearly defined?
- Is the type of data identified in the MOA/RSA? (sensitive)

Protection and Housekeeping Practices for two different environments.

- Personal Computer/Workstation environment.
 - Are Workstations protected by surge protectors?
 - Are fire extinguisher installed close by?
 - Is office lighting adequate?
 - Are employees required to log out when leaving workstation unattended?

- Computer, Server, IS equipment Room environment.
 - Is emergency lighting provided?
 - Are fire alarms in good working order?
 - Are magnetic tape backups stored properly and secured?
 - Are magnetic tape backups stored offsite?
 - Are fire extinguishers installed in the area?
 - Are periodic fire drills performed?
 - Are emergency evacuation routes posted?
 - Is an automatic fire suppression system installed?
 - Is a emergency power off switch installed?
 - Are overhead pipes or sprinkler system installed in the room?
 - Is routine cleaning and trash removal performed during business hours?
 - Is preventive maintenance performed routinely?

5.04 Hardware/Software

- C Determine the status of Information System Resources.
 - Are hardware systems in place adequate for meeting the needs and mission of the location?
 - Is the location continuously improving and protecting) their information systems to identify and support IT investments?
 - How is the location securing their IT resources?
 - How does the location determine when IT resources need upgraded? (For example: Are IT resources on a 3 year life cycle)
 - What has been the impact of information systems by automated agency software systems?
- C Determine the status of Information System software.
 - What commercial software suites is the location using?
 - What is the primary use of commercial software at the location?
 - Is the software adequate/useful for the location?

5.05 Information Collection from the Public

- C Has the location obtained OMB approval before conducting surveys of the public?

The Paperwork Reduction Act and OMB regulations require advance OMB approval before collecting information from 10 or more persons outside the Federal Government. This includes questionnaires, phone surveys, etc. For further information and assistance, contact the Area Office, and then the Federal Register Liaison Officer (FRLO) in the Information Technology Division.

5.06 Records Management

- C Does the location use the ARS Files Management Guidebook and ARS Directive 251.8, dated April, 1981, (currently being revised), as a set of general guidelines for establishing, maintaining, and protecting files and records?

C Does the location retire or transfer eligible records to a Regional Records Facility?

Instructions for retiring/transferring records are contained in P&P 251.8. To determine which facility services the location, staff should first contact their Area Office for advice and assistance, and then visit the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Web site (www.nara.gov/regional/quicklst.html) or contact the Agency Records Officer.

C Are classified records maintained in accordance with Departmental Manual DM-3440-1?

5.07 Policy and Procedures Management

Additional information on these subjects can be found at:

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/>

For information about the REE Administrative Issuances system, consult P&P 010, “The REE Administrative Issuances System”, dated May 25, 1999. When new issuances are added to the P&P website or when major changes are made to issuances, the REE Issuances Manager will notify ARS Areas and LAOs via E-Mail.

C Is the location using the latest version of administrative issuances that are on the P&P website? If not, why not?

C If the location is using issuances that have been canceled or replaced, list the number, title, and date of these issuances, as well as the reason. This will be used to help rewrite existing issuances so that they will better serve the organization.

C Has the location had any difficulties with printing P&P's?

C Provide the number and title of any P&P's that the location feels are particularly hard to understand. This information will also be used to assist the issuance writers in improving existing issuances.

For questions about the information contained in an issuance, or the issuances system in general, first contact the Area Office, and then the Originating Office listed on the P&P or bulletin or the REE Issuances Manager in the Information Technology Division.

5.08 Forms

C Does the location use the InForms software program to access the most recent version of standard forms?

ARS has contracted with Elite Federal Forms to develop and package federal and ARS standard forms for use with the InForms software program. In addition, ITD is also developing forms for this program. There are currently over 150 forms available for this application. Contact the ACS for more information.

C How are hardcopy forms ordered?

Any location needing paper copies of forms not included in InForms can order them from the Consolidated Forms & Publications Distribution Center (CFPDC) in Landover, Maryland. These orders may be placed either via a paper copy of AD-14 or CFPDC-1 or through the electronic ordering system. Locations should contact their Area Office for more information.

C How does the location order letterhead products?

Offices that have a need for letterhead design, envelope design, etc. should contact the respective representative for their location. (ARS P&P 256.2, "Printed Letterhead, Envelopes, Postcards, Mailing Labels", dated 1/11/94.)

5.09 Mail and Messenger Service

C Does the location maintain accountability records of the postage meter activity?

If the location is metering its own mail, ARS Directive 263.3 dated 4/2/91 and the US Postal Service (USPS) require manual or automated accountability records of postage meter activity. Either PS Form 3602-A, Daily Record of Meter Register Readings, or an in-house automated system should be used. Accountability records must be maintained for six years before disposition in accordance with the General Records Schedule.

C Does the location properly secure the postage meter?

The postage meter head should be locked after each use and the key secured in a locked file cabinet or safe separately from the postage meter machine (ARS Directive 263.3).

C Is the postage meter inspected annually?

The US Postal Service requires that all mail meters be inspected annually by the post office where they are registered. If the location purchases postage from the manufacturer by telephone, the manufacturer will send a written reminder to have this inspection performed. If the location takes the meter to the post office to have postage added, they should ask that the post office inspect the meter at that time to ensure that it is working properly.

C Ensure the location uses the GSA mandatory contract for small package overnight delivery service.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW BUDGET AND FISCAL

6. Budget and Fiscal (General)

- C In the interview process, determine whether location management officials (LC, RL's and LAO/T) believe that adequate support (e.g., guidance/instructions/ Agency P&P issuances, financial reviews for dealing with problems or issues, etc.) is given from ARS Headquarters and the Area Office to manage and control Agency programs, assets, and resources.
- C Ensure that all recommendations from recent audits and reviews (including CARE reviews, financial reviews, imprest fund audits, and Mutual Assistance Reviews) have been resolved, and appropriate corrective action taken. If not, explain.

6.01 CRIS Accountability

- C ¹Make sure that RL's understand and correctly interpret the Agency's Current Research Information System (CRIS) accountability policy, and that they are spending dollars by CRIS in accordance with the Budget and Program Management Staff (BPMS) approved allocation. In order to do so, review the location's most current CRIS Activities Module (CAM) report. Determine whether there are deviations in planned versus actual expenditures of more than plus or minus 5% or \$50,000, whichever is less. If so, determine whether approvals were obtained for these expenditure variances. If approvals were not obtained, cite what CRIS is not in compliance, and the percentage or amount in variance. (P&P 315.0)
- C ²Determine if obligations in Location Obligation Tracking System (LOTS) status of funds reports appear to be

¹ Question to be addressed/highlighted in all CARE Reports.

² Question to be addressed/highlighted in all CARE Reports.

made to the benefiting CRIS. In order to do so, review a representative sample of large obligation transactions and attempt to determine whether the obligations are consistent with the type of research conducted in the CRIS (i.e., it would not be consistent for a human nutrition related CRIS to purchase a tractor.) If obligations do not appear to be charged to the benefiting CRIS, explain.

6.02 Multiyear Planning

- C Determine whether the location's fundholders are performing any additional non-mandatory Multiyear planning (i.e., planning beyond the ARMS cycle) and how they are doing it. Multiyear planning activities are encouraged to allow for more accurate forecasting of program needs in the out-years. Include a positive practices note in the CARE report if the location conducts additional Multiyear planning.

6.03 Research Costs

6.03-1 Indirect Research Costs (IRC)

- C Determine whether each CRIS was assessed for Indirect Research Costs (IRC) and "All Other" fixed costs according to established Agency policy. In order to do so, examine the ARMP CRIS Allocation Schedules (CRAS) and supporting worksheets or other documentation developed for the last ARMP. Wherever possible, costs should be assigned based on actual usage of resources. Cost accounting prorations based on FTE, SY's or dollars are acceptable but should only be used after ruling out other more, precise methods of assigning common support costs (i.e., space occupied, number of telephones, etc.) (The ARS Resource Management System (ARMS) manual; Policy and Procedure Number 329.5) Determine if IRC worksheets or other documentation is available to support the IRC assessment methodologies used. If not, explain.
- C Determine whether the research personnel and the LAO/T work as a team to prepare the IRC analysis. It is important that RL's and LAO/T play an active part in the IRC process so that methodologies used are fully understood and there is agreement that IRC is equitably distributed by CRIS. If the RL's and LAO/T do not work together as a team in IRC assessment, explain the process used.

6.03-2 Shared Research Costs (SRC)

- Does the location have the latest ARMPS instructions for FY-2001? Do they feel the instructions are clear, concise and easy to understand?
- Does the location have any SRC at this location? If so, has the SRC calculation been applied appropriately?

6.04 ARMPS Preparation/Implementation

- C Determine whether the ARMP process adequately allows the location to prepare and update a comprehensive detailed annual operating plan for spending funds and accomplishing program objectives. In order to do so,

inquire about the effectiveness of the system for budgetary planning, and document any suggestions for improvement.

- C Determine whether operating costs are accurately stated in the ARMPS. In order to do so, compare LOTS year-end status of funds report to amounts budgeted in ARMPS by object class of expenditure. If there are significant deviations by object class, address these with the LAO/T for future budgetary planning.
- C Ensure that the location is planning at least 4 percent of base funds on Repair and Maintenance (R&M) as required by ARMP policy contained in the ARMPS manual (unless the location has been granted a documented exception to the policy). In order to verify that at least 4% of base funds is planned for R&M spending, add amounts in object class 2530 on the location's ARMPS Annual Operating Plans (AOPs) and compare that total to the total base funds for the location. If the total object class 2530 amount is less than 4%, determine what other budgeted amounts the location considers to be R&M, and explain.

6.05 Allocations

- C Ensure that official allocations are adhered to in establishing LOTS financial plans at the Management Unit level and for CRIS subaccounts. In order to do so, compare LOTS financial plans with Area office-generated Automated Location Planning System (ALPS) financial plans at the MU level, and with official BPMS allocations at the CRIS level. If there are any inconsistencies and/or if the location encounters problems reconciling LOTS at the MU/CRIS levels, explain.

6.05-1 Special Releases (HPRL, ENR, AD)

- C Determine if the High Priority Requirements List (HPRL), Emergency Needs Request (ENR), and AD Reserve releases have been utilized for the designated purposes. In order to do so, review ALPS financial plans to identify whether special releases have been made and ask to see the corresponding obligation document(s) to confirm that purchases are being made for the intended purpose(s). If purchases are not being made for the intended purpose(s), explain.

6.06 Salary Estimates/Tracking

- C Make sure employee salaries are being charged to CRIS subaccounts as planned on the approved ARMP. In order to do so, compare the ARMPS CRIS Resource Allocation Schedules with the Salary Management System (SAMS).
- C Determine if any problems are encountered by the location in using SAMS to account for salaries. If so, explain.

6.06-1 Salary Lapse Reporting

- C Review salary lapse reports to determine if they accurately reflect the amount of lapse to the CRIS level. Review offsets on specific positions to validate that the offsets were appropriate (Reference Ground Rules of

Salary Lapse). Ensure that the appropriate amounts are reflected on the LOTS Financial Plan.

6.07 Period-End Estimates

- C Determine whether the location fully understands ARS' Year-end Closing Instructions and Procedures, including preparation of period-end estimates. Inquire whether the location has any ideas on improving the year-end instructions and procedures.
- C Ensure the location is using the Personal Computer-based Period End Estimates System (PEST) for transmitting period-end estimates. If so, inquire whether there are any problems/issues in use of this application.

6.08 Prior-Year Funding

- C Inquire whether the location is aware of policy and procedures for prior-year fund approval requests. For requests of \$1,000 or under, the approval process is not required. For requests of \$1,001 or more, a Form ARS 323-8 (or an E-mail message containing the same information as the form) must be completed and approved. For requests exceeding \$10,000, a certification of funds availability must be requested from the National Finance Center (NFC), Reporting Section Number 4 (RS#4)--an E-mail message request is sufficient. (Policy and Procedure Number 323.8, Financial Management Manual (FMM), Section 2380) For requests exceeding \$25,000, FMD approval is required.

(NOTE: The items identified in Section 6.08 above, are expected to become Agency policy in July 1999 with the issuance of P&P 323.8, Use of Prior Year Appropriations. The draft is currently in circulation for review and comment.)

6.09 Prompt Payment

- C Determine whether the location management is aware and sensitive to the Prompt Payment Act (budget object code 4310) requirement that an interest penalty must be paid to the vendor, with the invoice amount, for invoices not paid 30 days after receipt (interest is charged directly to the fundholder's account). (Review the CARE characteristics package for information on recent interest amounts charged to the location.)

6.10 Claims for and Against the Government

- C Ensure that the location has access to instructions for processing and disposition of claims (Policy and Procedure Number 328.0 - Claims for the Government; Policy and Procedure Number 227.1 - Claims against the Government).

6.10-1 Collections

In accordance with procedures in the FMM, Chapter 2600; and Policy and Procedure Number 326.0:

- C Ensure that a collections official has been properly designated by inspecting their letter of designation from the Area office. Ensure that they are aware of all responsibilities.

- C Ensure that all collections (cash, checks, etc.) received by the location are properly secured and that they are promptly deposited/credited into the lock box to the proper miscellaneous receipt or appropriated fund account.

6.11 Imprest Fund

NOTE: Imprest funds should either be closed or have an approval in place from Headquarters and Area to be in existence. If still in existence, this section must be reviewed.

(See also form AD-359 "Cashier Account Audit" questionnaire and FMD's "Additions to Work Papers for Imprest Fund Audit" questionnaire contained in FMM, Exhibits 36-1 and 36-2)

In accordance with the FMM, Part 3000:

- C In the interview process, determine if the imprest fund cashier clearly understands the imprest fund operations, manuals, procedures, and the use and restrictions on the types of imprest fund purchases and disbursements that can and cannot be made.
- C Review the location files to determine if quarterly and random cash verifications are performed, including review of Form AD-700 authorizations and delegations of authority to approve purchases. A "bulk-funded" AD-700 may be submitted by the fund holder to cover all imprest fund purchases during a specifically stated period of time (e.g., monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, annually) or a separate AD-700 may be submitted for each imprest fund transaction. The "bulk-funded" AD-700 must contain the names of individual employees authorized to make purchases (FMM Exhibit 33-2).
- C In the interview process, determine if the Imprest Fund cashier's supervisor is aware of their responsibility and the cashier's responsibility for the proper management, control, and accountability of the fund. The supervisor must ensure that:
- The imprest fund is properly secured and safeguarded at all times;
 - The imprest fund cashier, Alternate cashier, subcashier, and verifier are adequately trained, and have access to all imprest fund regulations and procedural instructions;
 - Authorizations for use of the imprest fund are properly in place;
 - Purchases made from the imprest fund are monitored to ensure proper use; and
 - Documentation supporting imprest fund transactions is thoroughly reviewed before reimbursement of the fund is requested.
- C In reviewing the imprest fund files, calculate the average amount of imprest fund disbursements made per month. Determine if the imprest fund balance appears to be reasonable for the amount of monthly transactions. (Generally, the amount of the imprest fund should not be in excess of the amount necessary to cover normal disbursements during a two-month period. Determining the proper level of the imprest fund advance for locations with relatively consistent usage is calculated by totaling the amounts of SF-1129 reimbursement requests for the last six vouchers, dividing by the total number of consecutive days covered, and multiplying this

figure by 60.)

- C Ensure that adequate safekeeping for the imprest fund is in place. The security and safekeeping of the imprest fund should be tailored to the size of the fund, as well as the vulnerability of the facility. At a minimum, a small imprest fund with an average cash on hand balance of under \$500 may be stored in a fireproof file cabinet equipped with a bar and combination lock. Larger funds must be stored in a nonmovable safe with a three-position dial combination feature. If the weight of the safe is not sufficient to prevent its removal without special moving equipment, it must be secured to the floor, a sturdy wall, or between two large cabinets or other objects.
- C Ensure that the location is taking steps to reduce its imprest fund balance (through implementation of the Government purchase card and its check writing capability, etc.) for impending closure of the imprest fund.

6.12 Accounting/LOTS

- C Ensure that there is effective coordination/interface of LOTS with other Agency systems (e.g., ARMPS, CAS, ALPS, SAMS, RMIS, etc.). The Current Year column of the ARMP should be the initial financial plan amount in LOTS. LOTS must be reconciled with CAS reports on a monthly basis. The “CAS Obligation” column in LOTS Status of Funds Report should be tied into the cumulative obligations of the CAS OCA Report. ALPS financial plans must be used to update MU financial plans in LOTS. SAMS should be used to incorporate salary projections into LOTS. RMIS should be used to ensure that correct CRIS allocation amounts appear in LOTS subaccount financial plans.
- C ³Ensure that the information/data produced by LOTS is verifiable; i.e., that the information/data can be traced to the source documents. In order to do so, review LOTS posted and unposted obligations on transaction listings. Select a random sample of transactions and verify that corresponding obligation documents are found in the location files.
- C Determine what the location is doing to ensure compliance of FMD’s recommendation to capture and reconcile PCMS transactions?

³ Question to be addressed/highlighted in all CARE Reports.

6.12-1 Status of Funds

- C Determine whether the location uses the Automated LOTS Reporting Module (ALRM). ALRM provides enhanced reporting capabilities over LOTS. If the location is not using ALRM, inquire why.
- C Ensure that fundholders receive monthly status of funds reports from LOTS and/or ALRM in accordance with Directive 325.1. Although not required, it is suggested that fundholders also receive SAMS “Liability to MU” reports.
- C Determine whether the LOTS and/or ALRM reports are providing complete, accurate, and timely data on the status of each account. Inquire whether the reports are adequate for the fundholder's needs. If not, explain.
- C ⁴Ensure that each fundholder reviews detailed financial transactions charged against their accounts from LOTS printouts, at least three times a year, to determine if the documents belong to the MU. If there have been invalidly charged obligations, explain.
- C Ensure that the location performs an annual review of unliquidated obligations, and take any required action. (ALRM report F will be helpful in this process).

6.12-2 Reconciliation with CAS

- C Ensure that location funds control records are reconciled monthly with Central Accounting System (CAS) reports, and that unusual or unidentified items are followed up on with NFC inquiry personnel and/or with RS#4 employees. The local funds control records should be thought of as a “check book” and the CAS reports should be thought of as an “official bank statement.” Transactions appearing in the CAS reports must be “posted” in local funds control reports in order to maintain accurate account balances.

6.12-3 Inquiries/Corrections

- C Ensure that the location initiates inquiry and correction actions in a timely manner when errors (i.e., duplicate obligations, charges to wrong accounts, etc.) are noted in CAS reports. (One method of inquiry/correction is to submit a Form AD-354 Request for Information to NFC with an explanation of the problem, and include any back-up documentation.) If inquiry and corrective actions are not conducted in a timely manner, determine what the impediments are that delay these actions, and explain.
- C Determine if NFC on-line financial inquiry systems (TRAVINQ, CADI, and PURCHINQ) can be accessed. Ensure that they are used effectively for resolving problems and for other inquiries. It is less costly to the Agency to use these systems for inquiries than to make telephone contact with NFC.

6.12-4 CRIS Activities Module (CAM)

⁴ Question to be addressed/highlighted in all CARE Reports.

- C Determine if the location encounters any difficulties in the use of CAM for downloading LOTS year-end planned versus actual CRIS subaccount data into special reports for BPMS. If so, determine the issues to be resolved, and explain.
- C Review CAM reports submitted at the end of the last fiscal year. Determine whether there are deviations in planned versus actual expenditures in CRIS' of more than plus or minus 5% or \$50,000, whichever is less (See Section 6.01).

6.12-5 NFC Systems/Reports

- C Determine whether the fundholder (or designee) uses the following reports provided by NFC to verify the validity of special payment transactions: Annual Special Pay Report for verification of approved overtime, cash awards, etc.; Report of Travel Voucher Payments to verify travel expenses; Weekly Proof of Purchase Order Payments to verify procurement actions; and the Report of Miscellaneous Payment System Payments to verify contract, agreement, and other miscellaneous payments.

6.12-6 Cuff Records

- C Determine if fund holders maintain any funds tracking records (cuff records) in addition to the LOTS reports maintained by the location support staff. If yes, explain. As stated in ARS Policy and Procedure Number 325.1, "LOTS will be used by employees throughout ARS as the only location funds control system. No other system (either manual or automated) will be used or supported...Fundholders and their subordinates should generally not maintain any financial records, but should rely on the information produced by the LAO/T. The fundholder may maintain a simple pending file of outstanding documents which could be totaled and deducted from the LOTS Status of Funds report. The maintenance of additional records by research scientists and research support personnel should be strongly discouraged."

6.13 Letter of Credit

- C Ensure that Health and Human Services (HHS) reports of unliquidated obligations are being distributed by the Area office to the location for informational purposes.

6.14 Travel

- C Determine whether ONLINE-TRVL is being used effectively, by interviewing frequent users, and observing data entry into the system. If there are problems using the system, explain.
- C Ensure that written policies and procedures relating to travel are readily available for access at the location. In order to do so, look to see where the policies and procedures are stored.
- C Ensure that delegations of authority for approving travel are in writing, that they are accessible, and that responsibilities are effectively discharged. In order to do so, review the location travel files.
- C Determine if controls are in place to ensure that personal travel, when commingled with official travel, is not charged to the Government. In order to do so, review travel authorizations and travel vouchers for cases of mixed travel and make sure days of personal expenses were not charged to the Government.

- C Determine if adequate controls and reviews are performed for foreign travel which results in receipt of funds from non-Federal sources.
- C Ensure that original travel documents are kept for six years. In accordance with the General Records Schedule, paper copies of transmitted transactions (bearing the original signatures of all parties) and supporting documents (e.g., receipts) must be retained for a 6-year period. Agency offices that use the online data entry component to enter travel transactions are the official record keepers of the original paper copies of the transmitted transactions. These offices must follow the record retention requirements established by the National Archives and Records Administration in the "General Records Schedule".

6.14-1 Travel Authorizations

- C Ensure that all travel orders are reviewed by properly authorized individuals, other than the traveler, to determine that travel is official in purpose and nature and clearly stated, absolutely necessary, consolidated with other trips if feasible, and amounts estimated are reasonable.
- C Ensure that the use of types B, and N travel authorizations are limited only to individuals whose frequent, routine, repetitive travel requirements make individual trip authorizations (Type C) unrealistic and those positions have been pre-determined by the Administrator to be issued the type B or N travel authorization.
- C Determine if there were more than three instances during the last fiscal year of fund holders (or supervisors) post approving their subordinates' travel. (This procedure indicates a breakdown in the proper pre-approval process for authorizations) If yes, explain.

6.14-2 Travel Advances

- C Ensure that travel advances are only issued in conjunction with an approved travel authorization; and returned promptly when a trip is completed, canceled, or delayed past a reasonable time (Policy and Procedure Number 342.3). Emphasis should be made on travel advances open to non-Government persons traveling for the Government. NOTE TO CARE TEAM: The number of travel advances should have decreased with the use of the Automated Teller Machines under the Travel charge card program.
- C Ensure that managers are notified of outstanding travel advance balances at the location on a regular basis. Employees performing the travel function at the location should be performing this function. Inquire whether they are.

6.14-3 Travel Vouchers

- C Interview the employees performing the travel function to determine if the location is experiencing any problems with processing travel vouchers. If so, explain. Review the travel files to ensure that vouchers are being prepared accurately and according to prior authorization.

6.14-4 Relocation Allowances

- C Inquire whether the location has a good understanding of regulations and entitlements related to relocation. Determine whether the location has access to the REE Relocation Quick Reference Guide. Explain that the Guide is available on the FMD Internet WebSite at: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/afm2/divisions/fmd/>.
- C Ensure that obligations/adjustments are being properly accounted for. The authorized amount on the travel authorization appearing in TRVL must be deobligated, based on actual obligations incurred in CAS and reflected in the location's accounts maintenance records. There must be a review by accounts maintenance personnel to ensure that TRVL has properly deobligated relocation amounts.

6.14-5 Use of Contract Travel Agencies

- C Ensure that there are sufficient internal controls at the location for safeguarding undistributed tickets. Determine if a safe or a suitable locked file cabinet is available to store the tickets. The tickets must not be stored in the same safe as the Imprest Fund unless the Imprest Fund cashier is also responsible for the travel function at the location and has sole access to the safe.
- C Determine if a review of travel authorization/itineraries is made before tickets are given to travelers. Inquire this of both travelers and employees performing the travel function at the location.
- C Determine whether unused/partially used tickets are promptly returned for credit to the Government. Review procedures with employees performing the travel function at the location.
- C Interview travelers to make sure they are aware that "frequent flyer benefits (FFB's) and other airline bonus program tickets or credits, which are earned at least in part by official Agency travel, are used solely for official Agency travel as required by Federal regulation.
- C Determine whether any exception to the use of contract air service is documented on a travel authorization or post-approved on the travel voucher in accordance with Policy and Procedure Number 343.4. In order to do so, review location travel files and inquire if employees performing the location travel function are aware of this policy. (reference P&P 343.4, Use of Contract Air Services).

6.14-6 Government Transportation Requests (GTR's)

- C Ensure that accountability is adequately maintained at the location for maintenance and use of GTR's. Make sure that only the accountable employee has access to the book of GTR's assigned to them. Determine if the location knows how to transfer accountability between employees by preparing an AD-497 request for TR Action to NFC. (NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual - Title II, Chapter 2, Section 3)
- C Ensure that there are sufficient internal controls at the location for safeguarding GTR's. Determine if a safe or a suitable locked file cabinet is available to store the GTR's. The GTR's must not be stored in the same safe as the Imprest Fund unless the Imprest Fund cashier is also responsible for the travel function at the location and has sole access to the safe.

6.14-7 Travel Charge Cards

C Ensure that charge card reports are monitored by the Area Office for delinquent balances, and that the location is contacted accordingly.

C Ensure that employees leaving the Agency turn in their charge cards. In order to do so, request to see the Exit Clearance form and check list (in accordance with P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures).

6.14-8 Foreign Travel

C Inquire whether the location experiences any problems in processing foreign travel requests (e.g.. HQ/Area approvals, passports, visas, etc.). If so, document the specific issues involved. (P&P 345.3)

C Inquire whether the location experiences any problems using the Foreign Travel Information System via RMIS. If so, document the problems.

Under the pilot program for delegation and retention of official passports:

C Ensure that passport receipts and a passport log are maintained in accordance with Agency guidelines.

C Ensure that all passports and documentation are secured in a suitable locked fire-proof cabinet/safe. The passports can be stored in the same safe as the imprest fund if the person responsible for the imprest fund is the same person responsible for passports.

6.15 Utility Accounts

C Ensure that the location knows how to establish utility accounts with NFC through completion of the Form AD-474 Transmittal-Telephone and Utilities. Instructions are contained in the NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual.

C Determine if the location is encountering any problems with utility payments or reconciliation of accounts. If so, explain.

C Ensure that obligations for SIBAC, OPAC, Motor Pool, GPO, GSA, etc., are appearing on the Transaction Detail Listing (TDL). If not, determine if the location is taking corrective action with NFC and/or the appropriate Government vendor agency.

6.16 Payment Certification (AD-757)

C Determine if the location has any difficulties preparing the AD-757's Miscellaneous Payments (MISCPAY) System vouchers, or other payment authorization documents. If so, explain.

C Ensure that the AD-757's are being certified timely and correctly by a designated certifying officer. Compare the dates of prepared, reviewed and certified functions to determine the timeliness of certification. Ensure the

certifying officer has a copy of the certifying officers' approved AD-997 Unit Certifying Officer Signature Card as proof of designation. Ensure that no one but the certifying officer of record has access to the approved AD-997.

- C Ensure that separation of duties is maintained in the certification process to reduce the possibility of any fraud or misconduct. Ideally, the responsibilities of preparing, reviewing, and certifying AD-757's should be performed by three different employees. A certifying officer should not approve both the AD-700 requisition (including blanket AD-700's) and AD-757 for the same purchase and payment transactions. A certifying officer may not certify the same AD-757 he/she prepares. If possible, a certifying officer should not certify the same AD-757 that he/she also reviews or audits.
- C Ensure that the location's certifying officers are thoroughly aware of their duties and responsibilities including determining that appropriate documents (vendor invoices, receipts, etc.) have been issued; assuring that expenditures are in conformity with laws; inquiring about legality of claims where questionable; preparing the AD-757 correctly; ensuring payments are computed correctly; ensuring payments are properly charged; avoiding interest payments; preventing duplicate payments; keeping certifying officer code confidential; validating amounts paid on reports against the amounts certified; and retaining documentation for three years.

6.17 Agreement Accounting

6.17-1 Research Support Agreement (RSA) Expenditure Tracking

- C Ensure that each ADO and ADODR is fully aware of their responsibilities, and the procedures for implementing and maintaining the proper use of RSA's (P&P 282.2 and Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0).
- C Ensure that the ADODR or designee reconciles RSA cooperator billing data (i.e., the Monthly Management Reports or SF-1034 vouchers) with documentation submitted by the RL's (i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.) to ensure receipt of goods and services billed for.
- C Ensure that the location maintains an adequate tracking system for comparison of actual expenditures to the Task Order obligation(s). Some locations use LOTS for this purpose; others use automated spreadsheets.

6.17-2 Trust Funds

- C Ensure that the location waits for receipt of a check before initiating research activity for the cooperator. Trust fund agreements require an up-front payment from the cooperator before work may begin.
- C Ensure that accounting for funds in the fiscal year of receipt is properly established. For example, a 5-year trust fund agreement receiving funding in FY-99, retains 993 account designation throughout the life of the agreement. Funds do not carry over from one fiscal year to the next. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2420). Ensure that the oldest fiscal year funds available on an agreement are used first.

6.17-3 Technology Transfer

- C Ensure that the location is aware of proper accounting procedures in establishment of technology transfer

agreements. An X91 account is established as a trust fund and an X92 account is established for licensing and royalty fee receipts. An X91 account has up to 5 years for obligation, depending on the agreement. An X92 account can only be obligated in the fiscal year funds are received plus one additional fiscal year (Directive 141.1, Technology Transfer Cooperative Research and Development Agreements and FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2425.4).

6.17-4 Reimbursable

- C Ensure that the location's reimbursable agreements are accounted for under appropriate account types (e.g., 61, 63, etc.) as established by the Area as follows:
- Type 61 bills provide standard summary accounting information on billing statements to cooperators (i.e., name and address of cooperator, ARS agreement number, cooperator agreement number, agreement title or scope of work, ARS accounting code) unless the Servicing Budget and Fiscal Officer provides supplementary notations in the Remarks section of the Form ARS-324, Transmittal of Reimbursable or Trust Fund Agreement.
 - Type 63 bills allow the location to include more detailed billing information, if required by the cooperator, through submission of Form ARS-90, Request for Issuance of Bill, to RS#4 as referenced in (FMM Chapter 2400, Exhibit 24-11).
- C Ensure that the location is aware of carry-over implications for multi-year appropriation authorities. When the ordering agency has statutory multi-year spending authority, funds provided by the agreement are available for obligation by ARS for the specified years, subject to limitations imposed by the ordering agency. This will ordinarily result in carryover amounts from one fiscal year to another of any unobligated balance. The providing agency has the prerogative of stipulating the dollar amount that should be expended by fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.1.2)

6.17-5 Interagency Agreements

- C Ensure that the Form AD-672, or the equivalent agreement form from the cooperating agency, or a typewritten sheet of paper containing detailed agreement information, is used to document agreement terms and approval signatures (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.1.3).

6.17-6 Sales/Exchange Funds

- C Ensure that the LAO/T and Accountable Property Officer are following the required exchange/sale procedures. In the acquisition, sale, or exchange of property, both the item to be acquired and the item to be replaced must fall within a single category identified in the Federal Property Management Regulations. Proceeds from the exchange/sale of property are available for obligation to purchase replacement property during the year in which the property was sold plus one additional fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.5) Separate accounts are established for suspense (sales proceeds) and reimbursement (repurchases) and are tracked by fiscal year of availability. (FMM Chapter 2400, and Section 2470). Review the location files to determine if requirements for sale/exchange funds are being met. If not, explain.

6.17-7 Quarters

In accordance with the FMM, Chapter 2400, Section 2480:

- C Review location files to ensure that employee quarters payments are made through proper coding of Time and Attendance reports to accomplish payroll deductions. (Collections that are not received through payroll deductions must be paid into the Treasury Miscellaneous Receipt Account (121810) and thus are not available to the location for obligation.)
- C Review location files to determine whether quarters rental receipts are used only for upkeep of the Government residences, as required. If not explain.

6.17-8 USDA - Interagency Transfers (AD-742)

- C Determine if the Form AD-742 is utilized for obligation transfers between ARS and other USDA agencies. If so, ensure that authorized unit certifying officer signatures are obtained for ARS approval of the transfers (NFC Manual, Title II, Chapter 6, Section 5).

6.17-9 Revolving Fund

- C Determine if the location has a university (or cooperator) administered "revolving fund" composed of proceeds from the sale of location animals, crops, or related by-products. If yes, provide the dollar amount, and describe the record keeping responsibilities between ARS and the university (or cooperator).
- C Ensure that there is a clearly written MOU or agreement which specifies the ARS relationship with the university (or cooperator) and what kind of activities and items are financed by this fund. If not, explain.
- C Determine if ARS employees have the authority to authorize (or cause) expenditures to be made from this fund. If yes, explain if they are doing so according to the terms of the MOU or agreement.
- C An ARS official may not, under any circumstances, approve by signatory authority any obligation documents covered under a revolving fund. Review the location files to determine whether this may be happening. If so, explain.

6.18 Gasoline Credit Cards

- C Determine if the location is having any problems in reconciling gasoline purchases with NFC accounting ledgers. The following statement is included on the NFC Report of Gasoline Credit Card Payments: “Charges on this report should be compared to the amounts shown on your purchase tickets. Total charges cannot be compared to your accounting reports since this report reflects gross charges, whereas accounting reports reflect the net disbursement amount after tax deductions and/or discounts.” Inquire whether the location has any recommendations for improving the credit card reconciliation process.

6.19 Reference Manuals

- C Ensure that budget/fiscal external procedures (including ARS P&P issuances) are complete, readily accessible, up-to-date, and are being properly followed. Attach or reference any internal procedures developed by the location.
- C Ensure that references are readily available for each of the following subject areas and that they are being fully utilized and understood.
- LOTS
 - ALRM
 - FMM
 - SAMS
 - ARMPS
 - NFC Procedures Manuals
 - Travel

6.20 Training

- C Through the interview and review process, determine whether employees are adequately trained in budget/fiscal operations to perform their duties, and whether the location has competent and sufficient staff to carry out budget/fiscal functional responsibilities.

6.21 Budget/Fiscal Records Management

- C Ensure that budget/fiscal records are maintained and disposed of in accordance with Policy and Procedure Number 251.8, which provides records distribution schedules for administrative and financial management files.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW
CIVIL RIGHTS

- 7.01 Special Emphasis Programs/Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee Activities
- C Does the location initiate and conduct programs and other activities to increase awareness/representation of women, minorities and persons with disabilities (e.g., public notification of equal employment opportunity activities, special observance celebrations, and other educational and awareness activities)?
- C Although not required, does the location have an EEO Advisory Committee and Special Emphasis Program Manager? If no, go to 7.02.
- C Does the EEO Advisory Committee have written guidelines or by-laws?
- C Is there communication and coordination between EEO Advisory Committee members, managers/supervisors and Civil Rights program officials (e.g., Headquarters Civil Rights Staff, Area Civil Rights Manager, and Special Emphasis Program Managers) about EEO concerns and special observance programs.
- C Is the 20 percent maximum time allowed sufficient for Advisory Committee members and Special Emphasis Program Managers to carry out collateral duty EEO responsibilities?
- 7.02 Outreach and Recruitment Efforts
- C What outreach efforts have been made by the location to increase awareness of ARS programs and activities (e.g., visits to schools, tours, direct contact with local community resources, cooperative efforts with universities, high schools, and professional organizations, etc.)?
- C What outreach efforts have been made to recruit minorities, persons with disabilities, and female applicants into positions where there is under-representation? Were there any problems experienced while making outreach efforts, if so, what were they?
- C Does the location participate at the community level with other employers, schools, universities and other public and private groups in cooperative action for recruitment purposes?
- C What efforts are made to communicate the Agency's nondiscrimination policy and employment needs to job candidates and the community (e.g., are vacancies listed with the local State Job Service, Colleges, Universities, etc.)?
- C When announcing employment opportunities, have efforts been made to utilize minority/women's publications and/or media? If so, what were they?
- C What role has the Area/Headquarters Civil Rights Office had in outreach and recruitment efforts?
- C Does the location have any cooperative agreements with minority-serving institutions or minority- or under-served customers?

7.03 Career Enhancement

- C Has the location targeted positions for Career Enhancement Programs to provide opportunities for career advancement?

7.04 Discrimination Complaints

- C Is the poster “Discrimination in Employment is Illegal” with the ARS EEO counselor’s phone number as contact for information regarding filing complaints.
- C Is the “And Justice For All” poster dated (March 1998) prominently displayed on all official bulletin boards?

7.05 Affirmative Action Program

- C Is the location aware of the most recent Area’s Affirmative Employment Program Plan (AEP)? The AEP is a report required by EEOC to track employment accomplishments and barriers for minorities and women.
- C Are there any specific EEO activities/hiring objectives that the location has undertaken in the past 2 years? If so, what are the results?
- C Are current USDA/ARS/Area policy statements for equal employment opportunity/civil rights and the prevention of sexual harassment prominently displayed on all official bulletin boards? Are all new employees provided copies? (Secretary Glickman’s policy statement on Civil Rights, dated February 28, 1997 and Dr. Horn’s current policy statements on Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment, dated July 19, 2000).
- C Are reasonable accommodations to the religious needs of applicants and employees approved when those accommodations can be made without creating an undue hardship on the business of the Agency (1992 Federal Register, Part 1614, Subpart A, 1614.102)?
- C What efforts have you made to increase diversity (e.g., Research Apprenticeship Program, Summer Intern Program, Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities, American Indian Higher Education Consortium Summer Intern Program, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Program, Tribal colleges Program, Student Career Experience Program and Teachers Research Fellowship)?

7.06 Training

- C Other than the mandatory Civil Rights Training, have managers/supervisors, EEO Advisory Committee members and SEP Managers participated in equal employment opportunity training within the last three years? If so, what subjects were covered and was it effective?
- C Based on a review of training records for the last three years, does it appear that employees receive training

based on individual development plans and the functional needs of the location?

- C Is the FY95 sexual harassment video readily available for reference if employees are faced with a sexual harassment situation? Is the sexual harassment video a part of new employee's orientation?
- C Is the FY98 mandatory civil rights training video being shown to all ARS new hires? Is the video readily available for reference if employees are faced with an EEO/CR situation?
- C Are all new ARS employees taking the FY 1999 Sexual Harassment Prevention Internet Training or being provided hard copies of the course.
- C Are all new ARS employees taking the FY 2000 Diversity Internet Training?

7.07 Recognition

- C Are employees, managers/supervisors, organizational units, etc., recognized for demonstrating superior equal employment opportunity accomplishment?
- C What is the process for determining who receives awards at the location?

7.08 Persons with Disabilities

- C Have there been any activities to foster or facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities? (For example: hosting trainees, mentoring or counseling students with disabilities, and recruitment and outreach, etc.)?
- C Are reasonable accommodations made for known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants and employees with disabilities?
- C Are appropriate telephone and TDD/TTY numbers used for employees/job applicants with hearing impairment included in announcements and distributed/posted as appropriate?
- C Are sign-language interpreters used to accommodate employees with hearing impairment at special observances, meetings, training sessions, etc.?
- C Is the location aware that all materials which are produced by USDA and its agencies for public information, education or distribution, must include a nondiscrimination policy statement which includes a reference to persons with disabilities (Departmental Regulation, Number 4300-3, dated 2/25/98)?

7.09 Leadership and Commitment

- C Has the LC/CD/RL communicated his/her commitment and support of the USDA/ARS/CR program objectives to all location employees?
- C Are Area CR Manager and CR program officials considered an integral part of location management decision-making?

☺ How are managers/supervisors involved in CR programs?

7.10 Communication

☺ What and how are CR expectations communicated to employees? How are they communicated to managers/supervisors?

☺ Are special observance month posters (e.g., Hispanic, Native American, Federal Women), etc. prominently displayed, by designated month, where employees and job applicants have access?

☺ Do you have any comments or suggestions for improving the CR program?

☺ Is the location aware of who the Area CR Manager is and their role?

☺ Is the location aware of the ARS EEO/CR Internet Site, which began in May, 1999 (www.ars.usda.gov/eeo).

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW EXTRAMURAL AGREEMENTS

8.01 Extramural Agreements Program (General)

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0

- C Determine what the process is for submitting extramural agreement packages.
- C Determine who is maintaining extramural agreement files at the location and what type of information is being maintained.
- C Determine the level of support provided by the Area Office to the location. For example:
 - Determine whether the LAO/T feels they are supported in the performance of his/her duties and responsibilities by his/her on-site supervisors, RL's and the ADO.
 - Determine whether the location feels the Area Office provides support, guidance, and advice with regard to various extramural awards and their usage.
- C Discover to what degree the RL's secretary is involved in the agreements process; i.e., transmittal of documents, RMIS, preparing disk/hard copies.
- C Discover to what degree the LAO/T is involved in the agreements process.
- C Determine the turn-around time in the full execution of agreements. For example: What is the average time.
 - Obtaining official CRIS approval (starting at the location, up-to the Area, and finally through NPS)
 - Assembly of a complete agreement package to be forwarded to the Area Office or Headquarters for authorization/award (a complete package contains - AD-700 requisition, statement of work or proposal, budget, justification for funding increases and extensions, official CRIS documentation (except for non-research projects), pertinent information regarding the cooperating parties such as addresses, phone and fax numbers as well as e-mail addresses if available) and for Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements, a statement of significant involvement.
 - Confirmation by the ADO that the award has been fully executed
- C Determine if the LAO/T is maintaining a copy of the extramural agreements request package which is forwarded to the ADO; i.e., AD-700, approved CRIS, complete ARS-454 budget and statement of work or proposal. While it is not a requirement that the LAO/T maintain a copy of the request package, it is recommended that this documentation be retained for tracking and information purposes.

- C Does the location have any comments/suggestions regarding how the pre-award, award, administration and closeout process of extramural awards can be streamlined and improved.

8.02 Research Support Agreement (RSA)

Reference Extramural Agreement Manual - 280.0 Chapter 2400

(NOTE: Under an RSA the LAO/T is the ADODR with written delegation from the ADO.)

- C Determine whether an RSA is being utilized at this location.
- C Determine whether there is a copy of the ARS-550 Research Agreements Plan, which has been approved by the Area Director during the ARMPS cycle, for each Research Unit using the RSA during the current fiscal year. While it is not a requirement that the ADODR maintain this information, it is recommended by the Extramural Agreements Division (EAD) that it be included in the ADODR administrative file.
- C Determine whether the ADODR is aware of his/her duties and responsibilities delegated to them by the ADO for the RSA. For instance, the ADODR should have a copy of the Instructions from the ADO to the ADODR with a signed copy of the delegation acknowledgment page which has been returned by the ADODR to the ADO. While it is not a requirement of the ADODR to maintain this information, it is recommended by EAD that it be included in the ADODR's administrative file.
- C Determine whether individual task orders issued by the ADODR are supported by an AD-700, description and amount of supplies, materials and services requested, a listing of occupational categories with corresponding duties and qualifications, and dates or time frames for delivery of goods or performance of services.
- C Determine whether the RL is submitting a properly executed AD-700 to the ADODR for changed requirements that would either increase or decrease an original task order. (See Chapter 2400, Section 2402.1 - Preparation of Documentation)
- C Determine whether the ADODR is sending task orders for goods or services to the Cooperator requesting that the Cooperator provide an estimated price; certify that they are in a position to undertake, perform, and complete the task order; and state that they will diligently perform in accordance with the provisions of the RSA.
- C Determine whether the services requested on each individual task order are in accordance with ARS policy and procedures regarding the acquisition of goods and personal services under an RSA. (See Chapter 2400, pages 24-1 and 24-5)
- C Determine whether task orders are being submitted to the ADO to review in order to ensure accuracy and compliance with ARS P&P's.
- C Ensure that ARS is not selecting cooperator employees, administratively supervising cooperator employees, entering into employment agreements with individuals, administering cooperator payrolls, establishing wage

levels, **or** approving or disapproving a cooperator employee's leave.

- C Determine whether, after execution of the task order, the ADODR is preparing an AD-757 (Miscellaneous Payment System) and submitting both documents to the ABFO and/or National Finance Center (NFC) and the ADO in order to obligate the funds.
- C If the RSA is under HHS/Payment Management System (HHS/PMS), determine whether the Cooperator is providing a Monthly Management Report (MMR) or equivalent report to the ADODR.
- C Determine whether the ADODR verifies and approves the MMR based upon documentation; i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc., submitted by the cooperator and verified by the RL.
- C If payment method is other than HHS-PMS, determine whether the RL is properly certifying, and the ADODR verifies the receipt of goods and/or services using documentation; i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.
- C If payment method is other than HHS-PMS, determine whether the ADODR is completing and submitting an AD-757 to NFC with copies of the invoice. The ADO should also be on the distribution list to receive copies.
- C If payment method is other than HHS-PMS, determine whether cooperators are enrolled in the Vendor Express Program (VXP) for electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments.

8.03 Cooperative Agreements: (Specific Cooperative Agreements, Trust Fund, and Reimbursable)

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 - Chapters 2100 and 2300

- C A complete extramural agreements package must be forwarded to the ADO. Ensure that the location is aware of what constitutes a complete extramural agreements package. A complete package includes the following supporting documentation:
 - AD-700 indicating the fundholder's commitment, award amount and accounting code information
 - Information identifying the principle parties; (ADODR, Principal Investigator, Cooperator as well as phone numbers and addresses and the proposed period of performance
 - Approved/Official CRIS documentation; i.e. ARS-425-Authorization to Apply for and use Funds from Outside Sources, AD-416-Research Resume, AD-417-Classification of Research and ARS-550-Research Agreements Plan.
 - The statement of work and complete budget information. This information should also be provided to the ADO on disk or transmitted electronically.
- C Is the location familiar with the requirements regarding the statement of work for Specific, Trust Fund, and Reimbursable Cooperative Agreements? Examples of these statements of work can be obtained from the

ADO.

8.04 Standard Cooperative Agreements

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 - Chapter 2200

C Determine whether the LAO/T is familiar with, and adhering to, the requirements outlined in Chapter 2200 of the Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0. Examples of these requirements are:

- The responsibility for pre-award, award, administration and closeout rests with the LAO/T.
- The LAO/T must forward the draft agreement to the ADO for review and comment before the LAO/T sends a final document to the Cooperator for signature.

8.05 Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements (ATCAs)

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 - Chapter 3100

C Determine whether the location has any Grants and/or ATCAs. If so, determine whether the location is familiar with and abiding by the requirements outlined in Chapter 3100, Section 3104.3 of the Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 regarding Grant and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements. Examples of a Grant and ATCA can be found at the end of Chapter 3100. For Example:

- If ARS intends to have substantial involvement in the work effort, is an ATCA awarded?
- If the Grant is awarded non-competitively, does the file clearly document the reasons for non-competition?
- Determine whether the Grantee has submitted their proposal on their organizations letter head and that an overall budget for the project is part of the proposal.

C A complete extramural agreement package must be forwarded to the ADO. Ensure that the location is aware of what constitutes a complete extramural agreement package; i.e.,:

- AD-700 indicating the fundholder's commitment, award amount and accounting code information
- Information identifying the principle parties; (ADODR, Principle Investigator, Recipient as well as phone numbers and addresses and the proposed period of performance
- Approved/Official CRIS documentation (except for non-research projects); i.e. ARS-425-Authorization to Apply for and use Funds from Outside Sources, AD-416-Research Resume, AD-417-Classification of Research and ARS-550-Research Agreements Plan.

- Proposal and complete budget information. For an ATCA , a statement of substantial involvement. This information should also be provided to the ADO on disk or transmitted electronically.

8.06 Master Memoranda of Understanding

Reference Extramural Agreement Manual 280.0 - Chapter 4100 (100% review requirement - All files to be reviewed)

- C Determine if the MMOU is needed, i.e, the Area Office is reviewing the Master Memoranda of Understanding for the location at least every 5 years to ensure that the MMOU is program relevant (work is within the current objectives and mission of ARS).

- Refer to Exhibit 41-2: Sample Master MOU in the Extramural Agreements Manual

8.07 Supplements to the Master MOU

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 - Chapter 4100

- C Determine whether a provision is placed in each Supplement that duration is not to exceed 5 years.

- Refer to Exhibit 41-3: Sample Supplement to a Master MOU in the Extramural Agreements Manual

8.08 Standard Memorandum of Understanding

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 - Chapter 4100

- C Determine whether the LAO/T is familiar with, and adhering to, the requirements outlined in Part 4000, Section 41-7 of the Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0. Examples of these requirements are:

- The responsibility for pre-award, award, administration and closeout rests with the LAO/T.
- The LAO/T must forward the draft agreement to the ADO for review and comment before the LAO/T sends a final document to the Cooperator for signature.

8.09 Individual Memorandum of Understanding

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual 280.0 - Chapter 4100

- C Determine if IMOU's are being used when an MMOU is in place that could be supplemented.

- C Determine if AD approval is being obtained prior to establishing an IMOU.

- C Determine if IMOU(s) are confined to 5 years.

Attachment II-B - Final Written Report Format

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW, AND EVALUATION

(CARE)

REPORT OF ASSISTANCE, HELP, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

USDA, ARS, [Location Name]
[Location Address]
[Location City, State, Zip Code]

[Review Date (e.g., December 7-10, 1992)]

PURPOSE: Review of Administrative Processes in Support
of the USDA Consolidated Review Program

CARE Review Team No. [e.g. 3]

[Name - Title, Duty station, Team Leader]

[Name - Title, Duty Station, Co-Leader]

[Each member participating in review Name - Title, Duty Station]

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PREFACE

Utilizing the principles of the USDA Consolidated Review Program (CRP), Total Quality Management (TQM), and the CARE Charter, members of a CARE Review Team reviewed the administrative processes at the USDA, ARS, [City, State, Date of review].

The approach used was a location survey, general interview of both program and administrative personnel utilizing questionnaires developed by the CARE Program Team, and a review of documents or processes/systems against a listing of administrative functions and related questions to be answered. This approach incorporates the limited review principles of the USDA CRP and the goals of the CARE Program to:

- Assist, in a helpful and practice way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.
- Help to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of Total Quality Management.
- Assist those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedural guidance.
- Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of location activities.
- Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

Assistance, help, findings, or recommendations provided or obtained were recorded on summary documents by AFM functional code by each CARE Review Team Member and then consolidated by AFM functional code for developing this report. The enclosed Summary Assurance Statement is a consensus of the CARE Review Team and CARE Coordinator based on the limited review performed.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

[Rewrite page to specific location]

The USDA, ARS, location in [City, State], consists of [description of lab structure, i.e., two research units, and the Office of the Director which includes the Location Support Staff]. The location's buildings are all ARS owned and located on ARS owned land. The CARE Team found the buildings and grounds to be well maintained and attractive].

The mission of the [City] location is [type of research]. The research unit(s) have approximately [number of employees] and the administrative office is staffed by [titles and/or number of employees].

The CARE Team [state opinion of overall operation and appearance of grounds and buildings].

The CARE Team has noted in this report many good things that were found during our visit and feel able to provide assurance statements that all administrative functions are being accomplished according to policy with a few minor exceptions. [Cite general positive findings]

Areas of concern include: (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) and (7)

The CARE Team would like to express its appreciation for the cooperation, assistance, and hospitality extended to us by the Laboratory personnel during this review.

SPECIFIC FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, AND ASSISTANCE

1. LOCATION, AREA, AND HEADQUARTERS MANAGEMENT
 - 1.01 Location Administrative and Financial Management
 - 1.02 Area Administrative and Financial Management
 - 1.03 Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management
 - 1.04 Other
2. ACQUISITION-PERSONAL PROPERTY
 - 2.01 Requisitions
 - 2.02 Procurement
 - 2.02-1.01 Imprest Fund
 - 2.02-1.02 Blanket Purchase Arrangements (BPA's)
 - 2.02-1.03 Purchase/Delivery Orders
 - 2.02-1.04 Purchase Cards
 - 2.02-1.05 Training
 - 2.02-1.06 Government Printing Office
 - 2.02-1.07 Federal Supply Schedule
 - 2.03 Administration
 - 2.03-1 Simplified Acquisition
 - 2.03-2 Receiving Reports
 - 2.03-3 Research and Development Contracts
 - 2.04 Personal Property
 - 2.04-1 Organizational Structure
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 - 2.04-1.02 Reference Material
 - 2.04-2 Property Inventory, Accountability and Control
 - 2.04-2.01 Property Receipt and Identification
 - 2.04-2.02 Personal Property Records Maintenance
 - 2.04-2.03 Security
 - 2.04-2.04 Reporting Property Theft, Loss or Damage
 - 2.04-3 Tort Claims
 - 2.04-4 Approval Clearance
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 - 2.04-5.01 Acceptance of Gifts
 - 2.04-6 Excess Property
 - 2.04-6.01 Transfers under Specific USDA Donation Programs
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- 3. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, REAL PROPERTY, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
 - 3.00-1 Repair and Maintenance
 - 3.00-2 Energy Management
 - 3.00-3 Facility Accessibility
 - 3.01 Architect-Engineering (A-E) Contracts
 - 3.01-1 A-E Contracts, Formal Selection
 - 3.02 Construction Contracts
 - 3.02-1 Construction Contracts, - Pre-Award
 - 3.02-2 Construction Contracts - Post-Award
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 - 3.04 Real Property
 - 3.04-1 Lease Agreements (Land & Space)
 - 3.04-2 Government Quarters Rentals
 - 3.04-3 Acquisition
 - 3.04-4 Utilization
 - 3.04-5 Disposition
 - 3.04-6 Easements/Revocable Permits
 - 3.04-7 Property Management
 - 3.05 Safety, Health, and Environmental
 - 3.05-1 Safety, Health and Environmental Management
 - 3.05-2 Safety, Health and Environmental Education/Training
 - 3.05-3 Safety Management
 - 3.05-4 Industrial Hygiene
 - 3.05-5 Environmental Management
- 4. HUMAN RESOURCES
 - 4.01 Employment
 - 4.02 Time and Attendance
 - 4.03 Pay and Leave
 - 4.04 Performance Management
 - 4.05 Training
 - 4.06 Position Description/Management
 - 4.07 Employee and Labor Relations
 - 4.08 Awards
 - 4.09 Other
- 5. INFORMATION SYSTEMS ACTIVITIES
 - 5.01 AFM Systems
 - 5.02 Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications
 - 5.03 Information Systems Security
 - 5.04 Hardware/Software
 - 5.05 Information Collection from the Public
 - 5.06 Records Management
 - 5.07 Policy and Procedures Management

5.08	<u>Forms</u>
5.09	<u>Mail and Messenger Service</u>
6.	BUDGET AND FISCAL
6.01	<u>CRIS Accountability</u>
6.02	<u>Multiyear Planning</u>
6.03	<u>Research Costs</u>
6.03-1	<u>Indirect Research Costs (IRC)</u>
6.03-2	<u>Shared Research Costs (IRC)</u>
6.04	<u>ARMPS Preparation/Implementation</u>
6.05	<u>Allocations</u>
6.05-1	<u>Special Releases (HPRL, EN, AD)</u>
6.06	<u>Salary Estimates/Tracking</u>
6.06-1	<u>Salary Lapse Reporting</u>
6.07	<u>Period-End Estimates</u>
6.08	<u>Prior-Year Funding</u>
6.09	<u>Prompt Payment</u>
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6.13	<u>Letter of Credit</u>
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6.17-3	<u>Technology Transfer</u>
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- 6.17-6 Sales/Exchange Funds
- 6.17-7 Quarters
- 6.17-8 USDA - Interagency Transfers (AD-742)
- 6.17-9 Revolving Fund
- 6.18 Gasoline Credit Cards
- 6.19 Reference Manuals
- 6.20 Training
- 6.21 Budget/Fiscal Records Management

- 7. CIVIL RIGHTS
 - 7.01 Special Emphasis Programs/EEO Advisory Committee Activities
 - 7.02 Outreach and Recruitment Efforts
 - 7.03 Career Enhancement
 - 7.04 Discrimination Complaints
 - 7.05 Affirmative Action Program
 - 7.06 Training
 - 7.07 Recognition
 - 7.08 Persons with Disabilities
 - 7.09 Leadership and Commitment
 - 7.10 Communication

- 8. EXTRAMURAL AGREEMENTS
 - 8.01 Extramural Agreements Program (General)
 - 8.02 Research Support Agreement (RSA)
 - 8.03 Cooperative Agreements (Specific Cooperative, Trust Fund, and Reimbursable)
 - 8.04 Standard Cooperative Agreements
 - 8.05 Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements
 - 8.06 Standard Memorandum of Understanding
 - 8.07 Memorandum of Understanding

Attachment II-C - Assurance Statement

SUMMARY ASSURANCE STATEMENT FOR
(City, State)

Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Review Team No. () reviewed the administrative management/operations at the (City, State) location in (Month of Year) under the requirements of the Consolidated Review Program. Attached is a listing of the segments (functions) reviewed and assurances made. Reasonable assurance can be given regarding the location's administrative management/operations as follows:

- 1) there are sufficient controls and security measures to compensate for any identified risks associated with administrative management/operations and/or their environments;
- 2) the programs' clientele are satisfied with the results/performance of the administrative management/operations;
- 3) administrative management/operations are being operated in a cost-effective manner and comply with applicable laws and regulations;
- 4) there is proper management of the programs' information; and
- 5) administrative management/operations comply with management, financial, accounting, information resources management, budget, and other appropriate standards.

(Team Leader Name)
Team Leader

Dated:

Linda M. Mooney
CARE Coordinator

Dated:

Approved By:

W. G. Horner
Deputy Administrator,
Administrative and Financial Management

Dated:

Attachment II-D - Location Personnel Interview Questionnaire

Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation (CARE)
Location Questionnaire

Location Being Reviewed

Date : _____

Time: _____

Person Being Interviewed : _____ Phone Number _____

Please review the following questions to help you prepare for your confidential personal interview with the CARE Team during your Location Review the week of _____.

Comments concerning your expectations and satisfaction with the delivery of administrative support services will enhance the ability of the CARE Team to evaluate the efficiency and delivery of Services you are receiving at the location.

Note: All questions may not apply to your particular situation.

Thank You for taking the time to assist us.

CARE Team Leader

1. How long have you been working with ARS? Job?
2. What are your comments on the delivery of support and services in the following areas?

Procurement of Supplies, Services & Equipment:

Procurement of construction and R & M:

Extramural Agreements (Specifics, CRADA's, Grants, etc.):

Personal Property (Equipment, Furnishings) :

Real Property (land, structures) :

Safety, Health & Environmental Management :

Personnel Process:

Automated Systems (Agency software):

Telecommunications:

Accounting (Status of Funds):

Travel :

ARMPs Process:

Civil Rights Programs:

Training(Satellite, Cross-Training, Internet Based):

3. How do you feel about the support & guidance you receive from:

Location Administrative Support Staff:

Area Administrative Office:

Headquarters Office (if applicable):

4. Do you feel ARS Administrative written guidance, policy, and procedures are readily available and meet your needs? If there are some that do not provide information or guidance in a clear and concise manner, please specify.
5. Do you have a Government Purchase Card? How has the purchase card program impacted your ability to accomplish your mission?
6. Do you feel the location works as a team? Why, or Why not?
7. How do you perceive communication and morale within the office/location?

8. Does your immediate or next level supervisor, or location coordinator hold regularly scheduled meetings? If yes, are they useful ? If no, would you like them?
9. Do you feel the lines of authority and responsibility are well defined? Do you feel work load in the administrative office is appropriately distributed? If not what changes would you suggest?
10. How are your working conditions :
- a) Space -
 - b) Accessibility-
 - c) Work Hours -
 - d) Leave -
 - e) Equipment -
 - f) Security physical/electronics
11. Do you feel your skills are being used to the best advantage? If no, why not? Are you being recognized for the work you do (awards)?

12. How often do you review your Position Description? Is it accurate?
13. Are funds for training budgeted annually and available to all personnel?
14. What is the process for developing your IDP? How is it implemented?
15. Do you need an explanation or assistance with any particular process?

Attachment II-E - Sample Opening Conference Notes

SAMPLE OPENING CONFERENCE SPEECH

Good Morning

I'm _____, CARE Team Leader. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank LC, LAO/T, and the rest of you for allowing us to visit your location.

This is the 11th (number of years) cycle of the Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation Program, better known as CARE. We are one of 6 teams reviewing 13 locations this fiscal year. We believe this visit will benefit both the location and the team members.

Before I explain to you what the CARE Program is all about, I'd like to tell you a little bit about CARE Teams and formally introduce the Team members. Teams are comprised of individuals represented by the three organizational levels within ARS--location, Area and Headquarters. This allows Teams to perform reviews of administrative operations in much the same manner as peer reviews are conducted. We all have regular full-time positions within the Agency; none of us are auditors or examiners. Individuals are chosen based on their unique skills and abilities in their field of expertise.

Now, I'd like to introduce this CARE team to you.

Name team members, titles, location and background--may consider having team members do this themselves.

Now, I'd like to tell you how CARE came about and why we're here. In the past, ARS measured "quality" management via "conforming to requirements," as specified in laws, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements, General Accounting Office (GAO) standards, etc. To make reasonable assurances that ARS was complying with these requirements, separate administrative inspections or audits were conducted; for example, Mutual Assistance Reviews and Verification Audits. In the late 1980's, ARS also introduced and carried out major quality improvement efforts with such administrative programs as the Location Support Study and Location Automated System Task Force.

Then, in 1989, these inspections and audits moved toward the Total Quality Management effort of de-emphasizing "conforming to requirements" and focusing on "meeting customer expectations," or de-emphasizing the audit-and-inspection approach and focusing on the problem-identification-and-solving approach. In this vein, ARS Administrative Management consolidated as many reviews, inspections, and audits as possible into the single Consolidated Assistance Review and Evaluation (CARE) Program. The goals of the CARE Teams are to:

- Assist in a helpful and practice way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.

- **Help** to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of Total Quality Management.
- **Assist** those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.
- **Identify gaps** in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of location activities.
- **Promote** efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- **Assure** compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

The goal of the Agency is to review all ARS locations and Headquarters approximately every 5 years. In fact, during FY98, AFM had a CARE review. It is planned that the CARE reviews will replace or reduce Mutual Assistance Reviews, Procurement Management Reviews, Financial Management and Budget reviews. It will not, however, replace certain reviews outside of ARS; i.e., OIG and GAO audits.

While we're here we'll first tour your facilities to gain a general sense of the research being conducted here.

Then, focusing on customer (and we're all customers at given times) and provider interaction, we're going to conduct a review via personal interviews and functional reviews of the administrative processes here.

Personal interviews have been scheduled with program and administrative individuals. Questionnaires have already been distributed to these people to start them thinking. The purpose of the interviews is to identify everyone's expectations, frustrations, desires, and concerns about administrative services, not just individual gripes--and when I say administrative services, I mean all levels of administrative services impacting you; including those services controlled at Area and Headquarters levels. To the maximum extent possible, the information that is gathered will be kept confidential and no names will be associated with the comments. Also, we need to emphasize that CARE does not deal with EEO/Civil Rights complaints or employee relations issues. As part of our process, we look for assurances that systems are in place to handle these types of issues, but do not deal with specific cases. Also, if anyone here is not scheduled for an interview, but would like to talk to one of us, please see me or another Team member and we'll schedule a time for you.

Then, we're going to perform limited functional reviews of specific administrative areas. This will allow us to understand what and how local administrative service is actually being delivered. I want to emphasize that we will not be auditing your records; but are simply looking to see whether administrative processes overall are being done appropriately and within Agency guidelines.

Through the interviews and functional review, we, as a team, look for trends and try to identify areas of concern, if any--and again, this encompasses all levels of administrative management in ARS. We may also offer recommendations or suggestions to help people work smarter. In addition, throughout the visit, we will be looking for innovative ways that functions are being performed, in order to adopt them ourselves and pass them along to other locations.

If we can provide assistance or get answers while we're here, we will.

Finally, ____ (day of week) at ____ (time), the results of our review will be passed along to you at the Exit Conference. A written report will be prepared within eight-ten weeks of the review. LC, LAO/T and AAO (name individuals) will each receive copies and we encourage these individuals to share this report with you. ARS Headquarters Divisions also receive copies of these reports and they and the AAO are responsible for assuring that an action plan is developed for areas of concern.

The report also addresses trends, areas of concern and actions taken to address those areas. This system is still in the process of being updated, but will be available via LAN within the next few months. To date, data that has already been collected has enabled Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management Divisions to work at resolving common issues for the benefit of the Agency. One way this has been accomplished is in forming TQM Teams to address specific processes and in revising or, in some cases abolishing policies and procedures.

CARE will not only continue to bring issues to light, but to continually assess issues that have been addressed to ensure end results were as intended. So, you can see that while your specific location is being reviewed, you are a part of ARS, and as such, your issues and concerns contribute to looking at Agency administrative services as a whole. We, therefore, encourage you to be specific in your concerns and as open and honest as possible.

Again, we're looking forward to visiting with all of you and learning about the research conducted here. We know our review will be disruptive to your operation, but hopefully we can keep it to a minimum.

Are there any questions?

Attachment II-F - Sample Closing Conference Notes

SAMPLE EXIT CONFERENCE SPEECH

Thank them for the hospitality they've shown, the accommodations, and the staff's cooperation. Enjoyed the tour and hearing about the research.

As a result of all the information you've provided us via our personal interviews and reviews of specific administrative areas, we've looked for trends; ways to help you work smarter; ways that we can utilize processes here to help other locations work smarter; how customers and providers of administrative services interact; and problem areas, if any. With this information, we're in a position to, first, make reasonable assurance certifications as required to be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and, secondly, make recommendations to possibly improve processes.

At this time, we want to share with you a synopsis of what will be in the final report. There are ten functional areas that we must comment about in the final report. These areas are:

- General Administrative Management
- Procurement
- Property
- Facilities
- Safety and Health
- Human Resources
- Information Systems and Technology
- Budget and Fiscal
- Civil Rights
- Extramural Agreements

I'm going to read to you summary statements, or bullets as we call them, of our findings in each of these individual areas. In the final report, more detailed information may surround the bullets. Also, I need to emphasize that there will be no surprises in the final report; in that nothing will be in the report that is not addressed here. Again, in the interest of time, you may receive a more abbreviated version than what will be in the final report. When the final report is sent to the location, any areas of concern where an Agency policy is not being adhered to will be marked **“assurance with exception”**, or in very serious situations, **“no assurance”**. These areas must be addressed by the location as to how they plan to correct the situation.

Also, as was mentioned in the opening conference, all reports are looked at for trends, better ways of doing things, etc., for Divisions/Areas to look at problem areas and methods of process improvement. A summary of all locations reviewed for the year are entered into a CARE trends tracking database that will be available shortly on the Internet. Summary reports are also provided to Agency management so trends can be assessed. Based on some of the information in CARE reports, P&P's have either been updated or even abolished.

Finally, we'll be glad to answer any questions you may have about individual items, but we ask that you wait until I've read you all of the bullets so you can get an overall feel of the findings.

After reading bullets, ask for questions and then thank location for their participation.

Attachment III-A Team Leader Checklist

Team Leader Checklist

ITEM

DATE ACCOMPLISHED

Immediately After CARE Training for New Members

CARE Coordinator provides mailing list of team members to Team Leaders _____

Work with Co-Leader/Teams/Locations to set dates of reviews _____

Four-Six Weeks Prior to Review

Call AAO to discuss issues at location to be reviewed and to assure location is aware it was selected for review _____

Call LAO/T and LC to explain CARE process and discuss issues at location. Work with LAO/T on who will be interviewed, scheduling and conference room accommodations, lunch with administrative staff _____

Send Scheduling Letter to location _____

Conduct conference call with Team to discuss logistics of review, issues at the location, functional review responsibilities, interview partners, etc. _____

Packet of information for Team Members

- Hotel logistics for Team
- Airline schedules for team
- Home telephone numbers for team members
- Which team member(s) will rent vehicles
- Functional areas members are responsible for
- Characteristics package for location
- Schedule for review (including interview schedule which should have who they will interview, times, room #'s) _____

One Week Prior to Review

Call LAO/T and AAO to assure everything is in place for review _____

Prepare Opening/Closing Conference Notes _____

Immediately After CARE Team Returns to Duty Stations

Call AAO to brief on review findings _____

Call CARE Coordinator to brief on review findings _____

Four-Six Weeks After Review

Submit final CARE report to CARE Coordinator

(Team input should be incorporated)

Attachment III-B - CARE Report Critical Path

CARE Report Critical Path

Week of Review	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review Team On Site						
	Team Members draft assigned functional write-up and submit draft write-ups to Team Leader					
			Team Leader compiles report and edits writing styles to similar voice			
				Team Leader submits first draft to team and receives comments		
					Team Leader prepares and submits final report from comments received	
						CARE Coordinator, Special Assistant to DAAFM, and DAAFM review and sign report.